

'I DIDN'T TALK ABOUT HURRIYAT CONDITIONS'

Armed forces will stay in J&K: Fernandes

By Luv Puri

JAMMU, JUNE 21. The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, said today that the question of sending back the armed forces in the State to the barracks did not arise. He denied the statement attributed to him on Thursday where he was quoted to have said in Srinagar that the Centre would consider the All-Party Hurriyat Conference proposal in this regard.

Addressing reporters here, before leaving for the capital, Mr. Fernandes said he had merely said that a dialogue with the APHC would be considered and not its conditions for one (among the Hurriyat conditions are permission for its leaders to go to Pakistan and return of the armed forces to the barracks).

He said that on Thursday after the function in Srinagar, mediapersons "gheraoed" him and one of them asked if the Government of India was ready for a dialogue with the Hurriyat Conference. He had said that the Centre would consider whether to start a fresh dialogue with the APHC or not. "The question posed to me was not specific. All I understood was whether the Centre wants to start talks with the Hurriyat or not".

Asked whether the Centre would start a dialogue with the Hurriyat, he said: "In the past, we appointed K.C. Pant for the purpose of starting a dialogue with the whole spectrum of political leadership in the State. The APHC was also invited. If the Hurriyat wants to have dialogue, there should not be any conditions."

On whether the Government would hold talks

with Pakistan now that it was convinced that infiltration had stopped at the moment, Mr. Fernandes said "yes, infiltration at the moment has stopped and this is the position on the ground given to me by my core commanders. But this should become a permanent feature as General Musharraf has promised. For the moment, for whatever Pakistan has done, India has appropriately responded — by withdrawing the Naval forces from the Arabian Sea, lifting the ban on overflight by Pakistani aircraft and reviving diplomatic relations by appointing a new High Commissioner there. These are not mere gestures but are concrete steps taken by us. We await a positive response from Pakistan to these measures". He said the immediate threat was from militants who had already sneaked into the State. Evidence available suggested that approximately 3000 of them were in the State.

Referring to the Union Home Minister, L.K. Advani's statement that the situation on the border was still tense and that a large number of terrorists were waiting across the Line of Control to cross into the State, Mr. Fernandes said the borders were still volatile. The troops were still in action on the borders and "we have not relaxed our vigil".

The Defence Minister visited the forward areas in the Jammu region and reviewed the operational preparedness there. He was briefed by the GOC 16 Corps, J.B.S. Yadava, at Nagrota. He also visited some of the forward areas close to the Line of Control, Rajouri, Poonch, Nowshera, Akhnour and the International Border in the Samba sector.

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THE HINDU

'INFILTRATION HAS ALMOST ENDED'

We'll consider Hurriyat proposal: Fernandes

By Shujaat Bukhari

SRINAGAR JUNE 20. The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, said here today that the All-Party Hurriyat Conference proposal of "sending the troops back to the barracks" and allowing its leaders to visit Pakistan would be taken into consideration by the Government. He, however, ruled out an immediate withdrawal of troops from the borders and said, "We will watch the situation."

After attending the inaugural of a three-day seminar 'Kashmir Vision - 2020', Mr. Fernandes, when asked about the proposal put forth by the Hurriyat chairman, Abdul Gani Bhat, on Wednesday, said it would be considered. "*Is par socha ja sakta hey aur is par socha jayega*" (It can be considered and will be considered), he said without elaborating. (Prof. Bhat had proposed that all the troops be sent back to the barracks and Hurriyat leaders allowed to visit Pakistan for consultations with militant leaders to facilitate a ceasefire).

The Minister said militant activity in Jammu and Kashmir was continuing, but infiltration



had almost come to an end.

Asked about the situation prevailing along the borders, he said "it is too early to say something about that because our past experience with Pakistan tells us to wait further". He, however, ruled out the withdrawal of troops from the borders and said, "as long as we need, they will remain there."

On the presence of Al-Qaeda and Taliban militants in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Mr. Fernandes said, "they are there and we have the proof. But it takes time to give proof in that case". He said "the training camps across the border do exist but there has been a change in the

pattern, especially after September 11. Earlier, they used to be permanent but fearing attacks in view of the changed situation, they keep on shifting them here and there". He said the security forces had been engaged in fighting militancy to normalise the situation and they would continue to do so.

Earlier speaking at the seminar, he ridiculed those levelling charges that there was a huge army presence in the State and said the army had been in the State since 1947 and had made many sacrifices to protect the lives of the people and defend the sovereignty of the nation. He assured full support to the State from the Centre.

The Governor, Girish Chandra Saxena, having a dig at Pakistan for stating that Kashmir runs in their blood, said "it is the Kashmiri here who is bleeding". Unless Pakistan shunned its aggressive and hostile attitude, it was impossible to have normal and friendly relations with that country. The Union Minister of State for External Affairs, Omar Abdullah, and the State Industries Minister, Sheikh Mustafa Kamal, were present on the occasion.

BJP against allowing Hurriyat leaders to visit Pak.

By Neena Vyas

NEW DELHI, JUNE 20. The Bharatiya Janata Party today rejected outright the Hurriyat Conference proposal that its leaders be allowed to go to Pakistan and Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) to broker a ceasefire after talking to the Government here.

"The Hurriyat is welcome to talk to the Indian Government within the framework of the Indian Constitution, but going to Pakistan, that would be out of the question," the party general secretary and spokesperson, Sunil Shastri, said.

He also ruled out withdrawal of troops from the border till cross-border terrorism ceased totally.

The party line seems to be contrary to the view expressed by the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, who was reported from Srinagar as welcoming the Hurriyat proposal and describing it as a "good proposal" that needed to be "considered".

But the party made it clear that a similar proposal from the Hurriyat had been rejected by it earlier, and this second proposal also deserved "outright rejection."

Mr. Shastri admitted that at one time the Government had considered allowing some Hurriyat leaders to travel to Pakistan — that was after the first ceasefire initiative taken by the Prime Minis-

ter — but pointed out that some others were not given passports. The Hurriyat was free to participate in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections later this year, but being allowed to talk to Pakistan was not to be considered. There was no room for tripartite talks on which the Hurriyat had been always keen.

As for the troops on the border, the party view was that till cessation of cross-border terrorism, till training camps in Pakistan and PoK were shut down, till Pakistan responded positively to Indian gestures towards normalisation (India has said it has lifted restrictions on overflights by Pakistani civilian aircraft), troops should not be withdrawn from the forward positions.

Mr. Shastri felt that the international community should continue to put pressure on Pakistan and even intensify this pressure to "ensure" that all training camps were not just dispersed, but wound up.

In the recent stand-off between the two countries, Pakistan had gone to the extent of issuing nuclear blackmail — and it had to retract later — whereas India's nuclear policy was clear: no first use and no use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries.

As for yesterday's comment by the Presidential candidate, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, that the possession of nuclear weapons had prevented a war, Mr. Shastri said, "that was his perception".

Decline in infiltration, says Fernandes

By Sandeep Dikshit

710 1
20/6

NEW DELHI, JUNE 19. The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, today said there was "considerable decline" in cross border infiltration in Jammu and Kashmir, but ruled out immediate military de-escalation. Troops would be deployed in forward positions on the western border as long as it is necessary.

"Infiltration has come down considerably. There have only been one or two attempts in the recent weeks," said the Chief of the Army Staff, S. Padmanabhan, who was also present to felicitate an Army team for scaling one of the highest peaks in the region.

Gen. Padmanabhan firmly ruled out joint patrol by India and Pakistan troops along the Line of Control (LoC) till adequate trust was established between the two sides. Earlier this month, India had proposed joint patrol to verify cessation of cross border infiltration along the LoC.

The Army chief said military to military ties between the two sides were limited to telephonic conversations between the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) every Tuesday. Further interaction was possible only after both countries established trust in each other. "Right now there is no confidence in the other side. Therefore, joint patrolling is a long way off."

On the Army's role in the coming Assembly election in Jammu and Kashmir, he said militants would attempt to disrupt the election "but we are confident of thwarting their designs".

Mr. Fernandes did not agree with the perception that forward deployment was related with the Assembly election. "But, like anywhere else, if there is a law and order problem during the election the Army can be called in."

Mr. Fernandes said though the Government had decided in-principle to install electronic sensors along the LoC to monitor infiltration, formal talks with the principal supplier, the U.S., was yet to take place.

Asked to comment on the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf's observation that Islamabad's nuclear capability had acted as a deterrent, Mr. Fernandes referred to the Presidential candidate, A. P. J. Abdul Kalam's observations earlier in the day. Dr. Kalam had said the recent skirmishes had shown that if India did not have a nuclear deterrent, there would have been a war now.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson, said there had been a decline in cross border infiltration, but the trend must become an established one.

Declining to spell out a time-frame for de-escalation since "we are not at that stage where we can be talking of pre-determined steps," the spokesperson, Nirupama Rao, said India would take appropriate steps at "the time our moment of choosing."

There were certain pledges by Pakistan on infiltration, camps and support infrastructure to terrorists. It is important that these steps should be "visible, permanent and to the satisfaction of India," she said.

THE HINDU

20 JUN 2002

AMERICAN OFFER ON SENSORS TO BE STUDIED: JASWANT

India, U.S., U.K. may step up intelligence-sharing

DGR
15/6

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, JUNE 14. India, the United States and the United Kingdom are exploring ways to intensify intelligence-sharing to evaluate accurately the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf's promise to end infiltration across the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir.

A definitive assessment of Pakistan's pledges on cross-border terrorism to Washington and London has become the key to further progress on de-escalating military tensions in the subcontinent, informed sources here say.

India had bilateral institutional arrangements with the U.S. and the U.K. to share intelligence on terrorism. The emphasis now was on greater coordination and sharper focus to get a clear assessment of the emerging trends across the LoC, the sources add.

Positive conclusions from the cooperative assessment and further progress on Pakistan's part to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism on its soil could lead to additional moves by India to ease the military standoff.

Asked when India could take new steps for military de-escalation, the External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, today said, "the situation is pregnant with possibilities". He was briefing reporters here after a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security this afternoon.

The CCS, chaired by the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, reviewed the devel-

opments on the Indo-Pak front since the U.S. launched a high profile diplomatic initiative to defuse tensions between India and Pakistan.

Until now, India had relied on its own national technical means to get a sense of Pakistan's efforts to push terrorists across the LoC. But now it could benefit from high quality intelligence inputs from the U.S. and the U.K. in judging the infiltration trends.

The Bush administration which is making a serious bid to defuse the military tensions in the subcontinent is believed to have devoted a significant amount of its own national technical assets to monitor the infiltration across the LoC.

The U.S. has been pressing Gen. Musharraf to crack down on cross-border terrorism while urging India to de-escalate the military tensions.

India has announced some diplomatic and military steps to demonstrate as a good gesture and is willing to consider additional steps if Gen. Musharraf implements his promises.

A cooperative assessment by India and the Anglo-American powers is expected to generate greater political confidence in Islamabad that Gen. Musharraf's actions are being assessed appropriately in New Delhi.

Intelligence sharing among India, the U.S. and the U.K. will initially focus on infiltration but could expand eventually to cover the future actions of Gen. Musharraf on dismantling the infrastructure of terrorism on the Pakistani soil.

Intelligence-sharing with the U.S. and the U.K. is very different, informed sources say, from the ongoing public debate about the kind of technology needed for a physical mechanism on the LoC to verify an end to infiltration.

After the CCS meeting today Mr. Singh strongly reaffirmed the Government's opposition to any foreign forces on the LoC to monitor infiltration. "There is no proposal," he declared, for militaries on the LoC "other than Indian forces".

India insists that any mechanism on the ground must be bilateral between New Delhi and Islamabad, such as joint patrolling. The U.S. has apparently offered technical assistance, in the form of sensors to India and Pakistan in developing such a mechanism. Asked about the U.S. offer, Mr. Singh said New Delhi and Washington were discussing the proposal. "There is no decision on it," Mr. Singh said. "The decision is only to study the subject."

The question of sensors may acquire a new salience, however, if and when New Delhi and Islamabad agree on a mechanism for monitoring the Line of Control. Officials here insist that there can be no role for any other nation in this monitoring mechanism. "Technology can be the only third party," one of them quipped.

On the prospect of a political dialogue with Pakistan, Mr. Singh reiterated that Pakistan must first create "a conducive atmosphere" by implementing its promises to the international community on cross-border terrorism.

THE HINDU

15 JUN 2002

India will let Rumsfeld words on Al-Qaida pass

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, June 14. — On a day when a suicide bomber struck in Karachi, India indicated it was not going to make an issue of Mr Donald Rumsfeld's reportedly contradictory comments in New Delhi and Islamabad on the presence of Al-Qaida militants along the LoC. It said it had suitable Intelligence inputs on the issue.

The government has an understanding with the USA on sharing specific "actionable" Intelligence on militants attempting infiltration and on the location of terrorist training camps in PoK. The USA has assured that action would be taken regarding these issues.

Following the first meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security after India took some measures to de-escalate tensions, the government, expressing grief at "yet another terrorist outrage", made it clear that there was no question of allowing foreign troops or monitors to gain access to the LoC.

After the meeting, Mr Jaswant Singh said: "There is no proposal for any other forces from any other country, other than Indian



A child picks up a Pakistani bullet from her mother who is showing them to photographers at a relief camp in Akhnoor, near Jammu, on Friday. — AFP

forces, to be on the LoC."

Asked about Mr Rumsfeld's remarks that India and Pakistan should hold direct talks, Mr Singh said "India always stood for dialogue," but for a dialogue to be held, "a conducive atmosphere has to be created."

Mr Singh's remarks indicated that India was moving ahead on its own assessments of how the situation unfolded and would not be hustled into further de-escalatory measures.

The CCS meeting, under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, was attended by Mr LK Advani, Mr George Fernandes, the foreign minister, Mr Yashwant Sinha, Mr Brajesh Mishra, Planning Commission deputy chairman Mr KC Pant, the defence secretary, Mr Yogendra Narain, and other senior civil and military officials.

However, the BJP took strong exception to what the US defence secretary said in New Delhi and Islamabad. Mr Rumsfeld seemed to be unreliable and the world had no reason to trust him, the BJP general secretary, Mr Pyarelal Khandelwal, said.

Ultras killed: The Indian Army today gunned down three terrorists in Bahihal area of Doda district when they attacked a patrol party in Kachar Bass Khari village. India and Pakistan traded heavy mortar fire in Poonch sector and Kalaal, Laam and Jhangar sub-sectors of Nowshera along the LoC in Rajouri district.

Heavy shelling from across the LoC in Poonch sector injured three persons.

THE STATESMAN

15 JUN 2002

Intelligence agencies differ on infiltration

By Sant Kumar Sharma
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

DN *TR* *MB*
Poonch: Despite the gunning down of 520 militants in the district last year, the highest toll for any single district in the entire Jammu and Kashmir in a year, Poonch continues to be targeted by infiltrators and militants.

Places like Bhimber Gali, Mandi, Mendhar, Jhalas and Morha Bachhai have all witnessed encounters between the security forces and militants over the last few days. Although the security forces welcomed General Pervez Musharraf's recent statement that he was willing to stop infiltration, they are not willing to scale down the security arrangements here.

On infiltration, the perceptions of various intelligence agencies — the Intelligence Bureau (IB), Military Intelligence, RAW and the state police — working in the field differ widely. While some say that infiltration has come down significantly, others say that no such thing has happened. Since the issue is central to the present Indo-Pak stand-off, most officials refuse to go on record. "Gen Musharraf made a similar promise in January, but five months later, we still continue to kill militants in the hinterland every day. At any given time, at least five to six of my team members are actively pursuing leads on militant movements," says senior superintendent of police Kamal Saini, adding that it was not the easiest of things to verify whether infiltration was

"It was not the easiest of things to verify whether infiltration was taking place or not at any given juncture"

taking place or not at any given juncture.

A senior official of another agency says there is a tendency among some people to treat hearsay as the gospel, without cross-checking. He emphasises that it is important not to get carried away by reports regarding an increase or decrease in infiltration. He points out that this is natural as different agencies at times receive different inputs because they rely on different sources.

At another level, however, the differences among various forces/agencies run deeper as they show scant respect for one another regarding encounters, militants killed etc. A senior state police official pointed out that vital intelligence input is often provided by them. "Of course, the army has better weaponry and training, but our intelligence-gathering network is much better. So, we need to pool our resources for best results."

Rajouri senior superintendent of police P.R. Manhas adds that it does nobody any good if the forces don't show enough respect to each other. "The police and the army are not working at cross-purposes. We should readily acknowledge each other's strengths and not dwell on perceived weaknesses," he adds.

13 JUN 2002

THE TIMES OF INDIA

POLICE, I-T OFFICIALS RAID 11 PLACES IN VALLEY & DELHI

Geelani arrested, flown to Ranchi ^{10/6}

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, June 9. — Hurriyat Conference leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani and his son-in-law were arrested in Srinagar today under Pota and Public Safety Act after raids by police and I-T officials at 11 places in the Valley and Delhi.

While the former Hurriyat chairman and Jamaat-i-Islami leader was flown to Ranchi to be lodged in Birsa Munda Central Jail there, his son-in-law, Altaf Ahmad Shah, has been kept in Srinagar for questioning. A cardiologist accompanied Mr Geelani to Ranchi because he has been suffering from heart ailments. At Ranchi airport, he told journalists that he wanted to spread the word of peace and wished cordial relations between India and Pakistan.

Mr Geelani's other son-in-law, Mr Iftikhar Geelani, was arrested from Delhi under Official Secrets Act.

The Hurriyat condemned Syed Ali Shah Geelani's arrest as a "politically motivated conspiracy" and called a bandh on Tuesday to show the world "who is responsible for creating hurdles in the way of peace". The group's chairman, Mr Abdul Ghani Bhat, said over phone from Srinagar: "Geelani-sahib's arrest has come at such a time when all efforts are being made for peace and stability in Kashmir."

The raids in the Valley and Delhi were in

^{SG-1} connection with alleged overseas funding of militant outfits through the Hurriyat leader. Besides Mr Geelani and his son-in-law, four others, including his driver, were arrested. Mohammed Rehman Khan and Abdul

^{J-D&M.S} based supreme commander of the Hizbul Mujahideen, Syed Salahuddin, had been sending money to his commanders in J&K through a UK-based Kashmiri expatriate, Ayub Thakur.



Syed Ali Shah Geelani in Ranchi on Sunday. — PTI

Karim Bhat were arrested from Srinagar, while Abdul Rashid Saraf (brother of Ashraf Saraf, chief of Hurriyat's Pakistan chapter) was picked up from Baramulla. Police also raided the premises of Asiya Indrabi, chief of Dukhtaran-e-Milat, but couldn't get hold of her. She, too, has been booked under Pota.

The DGP, Mr Ashok Kumar Suri, said the arrests were made following the statements of Imitiyaz Bazaz, a Valley-based journalist arrested on 25 May. He had said the PoK-

Salahuddin had sent Rs 48 lakh to Mr Geelani through Thakur last year, Mr Suri said. "After the arrest of Asiya's husband Mr Qasim Faktu, financial chief of Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen, the outfit was facing financial crunch. As a result, Asiya started getting money from Thakur through Bazaz. The funds were meant for the Jamaat and Dukhtaran-e-Milat."

Mr K Rajendra, IGP-Kashmir Range, who supervised the operation that started at 4.30 a.m., said the raids were carried out at Mr Geelani's Hyderpora house; Altaf's house; two shops and houses of Asiya; houses of Abdul Rashid Karim, Mehmood-ur-Rehman and Geelani's driver Ghulam Mohammed Baba; and two premises of Mr Iftikhar Geelani (a

journalist associated *Kashmir Times* published from Jammu and a Pakistani daily *The News*).

The raid at Mr Geelani's house yielded, among others, a diamond-studded watch with an inscription 'From Pakistan Government'. **Pak reaction:** Pakistan has criticised India for arresting Mr Geelani in "utter disregard" of fundamental rights and demanded his release, PTI adds from Islamabad.

More reports on page 6

THE STATESMAN

10 JUN 2002

Army kills two Al Qaida militants close to LoC

New Delhi: Adding a new dimension to the ongoing tension between India and Pakistan across the border, the army on Sunday killed two foreign mercenaries suspected to be Al Qaida elements near the Line of Control (LoC) in the Drass sector.

The identity of the slain militants was not immediately known. Along with these two militants, two Pakistani soldiers were also killed in the same sector as the army opened retaliatory fire after the Mushkoh Valley, Drass, Batalik and Kargil sectors were subjected to heavy mountain artillery and mortar fire by the Pakistani forces.

The intense Pakistani fire, which has been continuing in this sector for the past five days, was obviously being used as a cover to enable these militants to sneak into the Indian territory, army sources said.

The encounter with the militants assumes significance in the wake of

top defence officials reporting the presence of over 1,200 militants, including members of the Al Qaida and elements of the Taliban in the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) areas.

Recent satellite images have shown Pakistan inducting heavily-armed militants close to their army frontier deployment all along the LoC, and New Delhi had expected that after the recent assurances conveyed through senior US State Department officials, Islamabad would disarm these militants and tell them to go back.

Later, intelligence sources said radio intercepts indicated that the two militants were part of a medium-sized Al Qaida group.

The army has sealed off the entire area and launched an intensive combing operation. The sources said the scene of the encounter was just 5-6 kilometres from the LoC in the main Drass sector.

Union defence minister George Fernandes had told mediapersons recently that Islamabad could be probing the Indian defences in this crucial sector which straddles the vital Srinagar-Leh highway.

For the past few days, there has been a reduction in the intensity of Pakistani shelling across the border as India and Pakistan moved towards reducing tension after Islamabad pledged to end cross-border terrorism. New Delhi had made it clear that unlike in the past, it would be looking for "permanent markers" to ensure that Islamabad was keeping its words of stopping cross-border terrorism.

The markers, include dismantling and disbanding of terrorist groups and their camps, stopping all high-band communication networks of the terrorist groups and ending hawala transactions used to finance these groups. PTI

10 JUN 2002

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Central alert: Ultras may target Writers'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

9/16 *5/1*
KOLKATA, June 8. — Writers' Buildings could be the target of a terrorist strike by ISI operatives between 10 and 15 June. This information was conveyed to the state government by Central intelligence agencies late last night.

Mr Amit Kiran Deb, state home secretary, said today that security in and around the state secretariat had been beefed up.

"There is no need to panic. We have taken every precaution to pre-empt such a strike. Security at other vital establishments in the city and districts has been strengthened too," Mr Deb said.

The Central intelligence agencies have warned that terrorists could trigger explosions at Writers' Buildings.

Talking to reporters at Writers' Buildings, Mr Deb said: "According to the intelligence sources, the ISI operatives for the first time have mentioned a specific period

D. D. N. Security
of strike. We are taking all possible measures. Some gates at Writers' Buildings will be closed. Metal detectors will be installed at others gates which remain open for people. We need people's cooperation."

Policemen in plainclothes were posted at different gates of the state administrative headquarters today. Mr Deb said: "We have not yet imposed any restriction on vehicles plying in front of Writers' Buildings. But strict vigilance will be carried out."

Airport alert: Security at the NSC Bose International airport too has been tightened. CISF sources said vigilance had been stepped up and more security personnel deployed to guard the planes in the aprons and vital installations in and outside the operational areas of the airport.

Mr Anil Biswas, CPI-M state secretary, said the chief minister had briefed the party on the Central intelligence alert.

'Govt. one on joint patrolling proposal'

By Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, JUNE 6. The Government today sought to put the lid on the confusion caused by varying statements by senior Cabinet Ministers on the issue of "joint patrolling" of the Line of Control (LoC) by asserting that there were no differences on this score.

"The Government is one on the issue. The Defence Minister agrees with the Prime Minister and there is no difference of opinion between them," Nirupama Rao, a spokesperson of the External Affairs Ministry, said.

Mr. Fernandes had said yesterday that the proposal was not feasible but later retracted his comments saying that he had not seen the Prime Minister's Almaty statement suggesting joint patrolling by India and Pakistan to verify the termination of cross-border terrorism along the LoC.

She said the proposal was "very serious, major and significant" and "if Pakistan is serious about its commitment to stop terrorism and control infiltration and to allow for a verification of the situation on the

ground, then joint patrolling is the most practical way to handle this". The onus was now on Pakistan to respond to the proposal. "The response has to come from there."

Defence analysts as well as serving officers say the proposal is "within the realms of possibility" but the current environment is "not really conducive to it." Joint patrolling is technically possible even at the current juncture. However, some confidence-building measures are required before this concept is tried out because the two armies have been in an eye-ball-to-eye-ball confrontation for several months now. They point out that the concept of joint patrolling is not new and was aired by India thrice in the past. But on each occasion, bilateral relations were showing signs of thawing as compared to the situation now where hostilities appear to be only a flicker away.

India first made the offer while the Shimla Agreement was being drafted after Pakistan had been squarely routed in a war and was keen on improving bilateral ties. Later, it was revived in 1989 when V.P. Singh was the Prime Minister and the

Government was keen on putting behind the bitterness generated by an aggressive Indian Army exercise, 'Operation Brasstacks', and Islamabad's patronising of Sikh terrorists. While the proposal during Mr. Singh's tenure pertained to joint patrolling in Punjab, a few weeks before the Agra summit, this concept was sought to be extended to Jammu and Kashmir as part of several confidence-building measures being suggested at that time.

Pakistan either rejected the proposals or responded with the concept of coordinated patrolling which India feels is meaningless.

Serving officers, who have faced the brunt of Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, do not think the proposal can be implemented under the present circumstances. Joint patrolling can have some meaning only after Pakistan completely dismantles the terrorist training camps. For this, Islamabad would have to play a pro-active role and demonstrate its will to make a clean break with terrorists whom it has been patronising, said analysts.

However, they feel that the

proposal can succeed in the future. Despite mutual antipathy between the two establishments, some kind of arrangement still exists at the border for regular contacts. On the western border, Pakistan Rangers and the Border Security Force hold flag meetings and the two Directors-General of Military Operations maintain telephonic contact every week, just as they did this Tuesday.

Similarly, the BSF and the Bangladesh Rifles meet frequently while Chinese and Indian forces on the Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh border exchange mail and also help in locating soldiers who stray into each other's territories. "These contacts can be built up into an arrangement on the lines of what has been suggested by the Prime Minister," they feel.

But a section of the serving and retired officers are uncomfortable with the proposal. "There are too many pitfalls. We will compromise our position and could even show them things we do not want them to see. It is one thing to observe our defences through binoculars and another to see them at close quarters," they say

07 JUN 2002

THE HINDU

ARMITAGE ARRIVES TODAY ON PEACE MISSION

Delhi against US-UK patrol

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, June 6. — The US deputy secretary of state, Mr Richard Armitage, arrives here from Islamabad tomorrow to try and broker an easing of tension between the two countries.

A day after Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee mooted a proposal for joint Indo-Pak patrolling along the LoC to verify levels of cross-border infiltration, British newspapers today reported that Mr Armitage might suggest patrolling along the LoC by US and British troops.

(India opposes any plan of US and UK troops patrolling the LoC. It favours joint patrols by Indian and Pakistani troops, Mr Brajesh Mishra, national security adviser, said. "The terrain here (LoC) is difficult, and only India and Pakistan know it inch by inch. It is more important that India and Pakistan monitor this territory," Mr Mishra said at a press conference in Moscow, adds an agency report.)

The foreign ministry spokesperson today said the issue of joint Indo-Pak patrolling along

the LoC was a "serious, significant and major initiative", which the government would like Pakistan to consider.

Mr Vajpayee's proposal is

Rumsfeld may postpone visit

NEW DELHI, June 6. — The US defence secretary, Mr Donald Rumsfeld, is likely to postpone his visit to the sub-continent. Mr Rumsfeld was due in the Capital on Sunday for talks with Indian leaders but will delay his visit, perhaps, to allow the US government to gauge the fallout of Mr Richard Armitage's visit, defence officials said today.

Mr Rumsfeld may call for an international verification force of 500 troops on helicopters to check if there is any infiltration — SNS

aimed at breaking the deadlock between the two countries on infiltration and cross-border terrorism, she said. It would remove Pakistani grievances of India being "the accuser and the

judge", and it would stop India from appearing obdurate on the issue of dialogue in the wake of Pakistani denials of infiltration. Also, if accepted, it would imply Pakistan's acceptance of the LoC.

In any case, senior officials said, the proposal squarely puts the ball back in Pakistan's court.

During his day-long visit Mr Armitage will be briefed on India's assessment of the current situation, including sharing of Intelligence reports, the spokesperson said. The issue of the treatment of Indian diplomatic staff in Pakistan will also be raised. Mr Armitage is scheduled to meet the Prime Minister, the home minister, the defence minister, the external affairs minister and the Leader of the Opposition during his brief visit.

The matter of foreign embassies recalling their citizens from India is not on the agenda of the meetings with Mr Armitage, the spokesperson said. But she expressed "disappointment" at nations pulling out their people from India. "This has created

PATROL

(Continued from page 1)

needless hysteria. Life here is safe and secure". The "major part of the responsibility (for this move to evacuate citizens) lies with Pakistan," she said.

Defence officials also see little chance of an international force, comprising US and British troops, being deployed on the LoC to check infiltration.

The issue of joint Indo-Pak patrolling, sources said, is more a "counter-proposal" to tell the world community in Almaty that India is not stubborn and wants a decent solution to the infiltration problem.

The LoC is one of the most difficult areas to monitor despite the measures already taken. It runs several hundred miles from Akhnoor, in the plains around Jammu right up to the Siachen Glacier through high mountains and thick forests. From the Glacier to Zojila Pass through Batalik, Kargil and Drass are very high mountains. Picking up infiltrators who enter through this region in small groups is difficult despite having additional troops and high tech devices.

The stretch from Zojila to Tangdhar is rough. The Gurez area is not densely forested but there are high peaks — Lili 1 and 2, about 5,550 metres high — lining this area. Close by is Zaninderkhan Galli, a densely forested infiltration route. The Farkha Galli is difficult to patrol as is the Tutwari Galli, close to Tangdhar. The Lolab Valley is used by terrorists who come in through the Rajdhan Pass. The IMG Pass leads to the Rajawar forest and then, to Baramulla, Doda and Anantnag.

South of the Pir Panjal range, currently, the 16 Corps area, there are three or four major entry points. They include the Kimi and the Betar Nullahs in Poonch.

Turn to page 6

No de-escalation now: Fernandes

Statesman News Service

BANGALORE, June 6. — Mr George Fernandes today ruled out de-escalation along the International Border so long as Pakistan refused to meet India's demand to curb cross-border terrorism.

After the successful test flight of LCA technology demonstrator two, the defence minister said Pakistan must hand over at least 14 of the 20 terrorists wanted in India as they are Indian citizens. He was responding to queries regarding reports in a section of the press that de-escalation process might start soon.

Mr Fernandes said: "Our conditions are important because if cross-border terrorism does not stop, we have a problem on our hands...Therefore, we'll wait as long as it's necessary." Till now there's no indication of a change in Pakistan's attitude nor has it encouraged terrorists to move out of camps in that country, he added.

Terrorists of Indian origin enjoying Pakistan's support should first be handed over to India. "Unless these things happen, there cannot be any de-escalation," the minister said.

BJP denies PM-George rift

NEW DELHI, June 6. — The BJP today claimed there were no differences between the statements of Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee and Mr George Fernandes on the issue of joint patrolling along the Indo-Pak borders.

While the Prime Minister proposed joint patrolling, the defence minister, who earlier said it was not possible clarified that it should be examined, the BJP spokesperson, Mr Sunil Shashtri said. Both of them said the issue should be examined, he said adding that Mr Vajpayee's statement was a well thought out statement.

Lauding the outcome of the Almaty meet Mr Shashtri stressed that Pakistan was completely isolated at the diplomatic level. Now it is hoped that Pakistan would abide by the Almaty Act and take steps to end cross-border terrorism. "Once cross-border terrorism comes to an end, the Kashmir issue can be taken up in its proper perspective," he said. — SNS

Asked about the travel advisories issued by the UK, the USA and other countries, he said it was difficult to judge the motive behind this. After all, General Pervez Musharraf had himself ridiculed any talk of using nuclear option.

Regarding defence outlay, he said money should never be the consideration for defence.

He also referred to his statement yesterday which seemed to contradict the one given by Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee at Almaty on joint patrolling along the IB.

Mr Fernandes said such patrolling would not be possible.

The defence minister said now that Pakistan had rejected Mr Vajpayee's offer, "there can't be a one-sided proposal".

He explained Mr Vajpayee had only said India would have a look at the possibility of a joint patrolling. "When I responded to your queries yesterday, I didn't know what the Prime Minister had said on the subject. In any case, I got the correct version and later Pakistan had responded to it."

07 JUN 2002

THE STATESMAN

PM suggests joint patrolling along LoC

By Rajesh Ramachandran
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Almaty: Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee said on Wednesday that India was prepared to consider joint patrolling of the Line of Control with Pakistan so that the two countries could ensure a

SQUABBLES IN THE JANG PARIVAR

permanent, verifiable solution to the problem of infiltration.

However, Mr Vajpayee was quick to emphasise that such an approach would come only after Pakistan demonstrated its com-

mitment to stop cross-border terrorism and that there would be no immediate withdrawal of forces from the border.

The Prime Minister also made it clear that rather than going to war, India would seek international pressure to check Pakistan-sponsored terrorism.

The eyeball-to-eyeball situation on the border—which has generated fears of a nuclear war and much international concern—may still continue as an Indian tactic to pressure the international community to get Pakistan to stop exporting terrorism across its border.

Addressing a press confer-

ence, the PM appeared confident that the situation on the border would improve and that war could be averted. "Once infiltration stops, terrorist camps are dismantled and they have been verified, then we can consider talking about other steps that will lead to de-escalation," Mr Vajpayee said.

Since the probable bone of contention between India and Pakistan is the veracity of Islamabad's claims that it has stopped infiltration across the LoC, verification holds the key.

General Pervez Musharraf had said on Tuesday that Pakistan was ready for its claims to be cer-

tified by the U.S. or any other international force. It was in the context of discounting the need for international verification—that Mr Vajpayee proposed joint patrolling by India and Pakistan as a means of establishing the true picture.

"An agreement on joint patrolling was made earlier between India and Pakistan," Mr Vajpayee said. "Both the countries can agree to it again. The hilly terrain of Kashmir is difficult and unknown to outsiders and hence it is not possible for a third country to do the verification. There is also no need for that," he added.

Pakistan offers a guarded response

Islamabad: Pakistan on Wednesday gave a cautious response to Mr Vajpayee's proposal of joint patrolling along the LoC to stop infiltration into J&K, saying such a mechanism was unlikely to work in the current state of bilateral ties.

"Given the state of Pakistan-India relations, mechanisms for joint patrolling are unlikely to work," the foreign office said. PTI

IT WILL NEVER MATERIALISE: FERNANDES

PM wants joint LoC patrol

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Nilova Roy Chaudhury in Almaty

June 5. — Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee today proposed joint patrolling of the Line of Control by India and Pakistan. This is seen as an attempt to counter Pakistan's renewed focus on third-party mediation on Kashmir.

The Prime Minister said: "It is impractical to suggest that a third country should send observers to monitor the LoC, where the terrain is mountainous and inaccessible." If Pakistan stops cross-border infiltration, joint patrolling of the LoC by India and Pakistan could be considered, he said.

The defence minister, Mr George Fernandes has, however, ruled out such a possibility, saying "it would never happen", adds an agency report from Bangalore. Defence officials said such matters needed to be worked out after discussions and at present, the two countries were not talking at all.

(Pakistan has reacted cautiously to Mr Vajpayee's suggestion saying "the idea can be tabled during the dialogue", adds AFP from Islamabad.)

Mr Vajpayee said removal of troops deployed on the border would be the last step. "It would not be possible for us to simply accept Pakistani assurances (that infiltration has ended). Verification is required and we would test their assurances on the ground."

At the Agra summit last year, Pakistan was not even willing to acknowledge the term "cross-border terrorism". Under increased international pressure, it has now been forced to make statements like "cross-border terrorism has ended" and raise rhetorical questions like "where is the infiltration", he said.

The Prime Minister said relations between the two countries had moved forward from Agra

(summit) and hoped all matters, including Kashmir, would be sorted out peacefully through dialogue. But a dialogue would be initiated only if Pakistan ends cross-border infiltration.

Ruling out international mediation in bilateral matters of India and Pakistan, Mr Vajpayee said the increased international pressure on Pakistan was part of diplomatic efforts to persuade it to abjure terrorism.

Economic sanctions could be considered against Pakistan if it did not stop sponsoring cross-border terrorism, he said.

Bush appeals to India, Pakistan

WASHINGTON, June 5. — President George W Bush today called up Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee and General Pervez Musharraf and asked the two leaders to "choose the path of diplomacy." He urged them to take steps that will ease tensions and reduce the risk of war, the White House spokesman, Mr Ari Fleisher, said. The USA again asked its citizens to leave India and Pakistan in view of the military stand-off between the two countries. — AFP/PTI

Editorial: Parting message,
page 4

Admitting that escalation of tension along the border had hit the economy, the Prime Minister said the economy was resilient enough to bear the brunt. "We want tensions to end, the threat of war to recede and economic prospects to open up, but Pakistan will have to stop infiltration. The CICA summit has paved the way for stepping up international resolve against terrorism."

Mr Vajpayee, who returned to Delhi tonight, said India "does not share" the assessment of the situation by foreign countries which have moved out their personnel from India following escalation of border tension.

Turkey offer: Turkey has offered to assist India and Pakistan in reducing tension, reports AFP from Ankara. Turkish Prime Minister Mr Bulent Ecevit has written to Mr Vajpayee and Gen Musharraf, saying "Turkey is ready to assume any role to defuse tension between the two sides".

'Situation unchanged': Gen Musharraf has said the situation along the Indo-Pak border "remained unchanged", reports PTI from Islamabad. Back home from Almaty, Gen. Musharraf said he hoped the tension would not escalate further.

War threat still looms large: Advani, page 6

THE STATESMAN

PROMISES:

4/6 (Continued from page 1)

"I don't have any conditions (for a meeting). You need to ask this question to Mr Vajpayee," Gen. Musharraf told reporters after meeting President Nazarbaev.

He said the Kazakh President had told him that he had been unable to obtain an assurance from Mr Vajpayee that the Indian Prime Minister would agree to speak to him.

The UN Secretary-General, Mr Kofi Annan, said he hoped President Putin and Mr Jiang Zemin would be able to dissuade leaders of the two countries from any further escalation during their discussions at the Almaty summit, adds PTI.

After Gen. Musharraf's arrival at the Kazakh capital, tempers of Pakistani media-persons have begun to fray. They waylaid the official spokesperson of the Indian external affairs ministry in a pack with such aggressive questions as "what more do you want him (Gen. Musharraf) to do?" "Is there no end — limited war, conventional war and even nuclear war? Where do you want this to end?" they continued. Before walking out of the melee, the spokesperson asked who actually had been doing the nuclear saber-rattling. Pakistani reporters didn't even spare Mr Mishra.

Meanwhile, speculations are rife regarding what should be the order in which President Vladimir Putin would meet Mr Vajpayee and Gen. Musharraf.

Indian officials said at the CICA summit, heads of state would speak before heads of government, giving the Prime Minister a chance to counter any charges Gen. Musharraf might hurl at him. That, as in Kathmandu, is being seen as a cause for India to be "one up".

That the international community is under the grip of the nuclear scare is clear from the huge western media presence at the CICA.

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Delhi banks on Pak promises

Nilova Roy Chaudhury in Almaty

June 3. — "If there is lessening of tensions,...it is because of the promises made by General Pervez Musharraf and conveyed to us by the USA and the UK. Not because of their (Mr Vajpayee and President Musharraf) presence at Almaty," Mr Brajesh Mishra said here today.

The national security adviser asserted until the promises made by Gen. Musharraf to various interlocutors in the international community are implemented, there is no question of opening a dialogue with Pakistan. "If these promises are implemented ... and we can verify them, we'll take appropriate steps," Mr Mishra said.

Both Mr Mishra and the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Omar Abdullah, stressed that there will be no meeting at any level between officials of India and Pakistan. "We are here for an international conference...for which we've prepared very hard," Mr Mishra said.

Mr Abdullah spent a good part of yesterday, he said, trying to figure out what new "antics" the General could possibly display. The Prime Minister would "do nothing to attract attention", implying that after the Kathmandu experience, they are prepared for any histrionics.

The principal secretary to the Prime Minister

further said "promises were also made on 12 January" that Pakistan's soil wouldn't be allowed to be used for fomenting terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir.

Although infiltration had declined since February, there had been a considerable increase in terrorist activities and infiltration attempts (an average of 300 incidents per month) while about 300 people had been killed. India wants,

senior officials said, infiltration across the LoC to end permanently — "switching on and off the terror tap" won't do.

Senior officials said the India-Pakistan stand off seems to dominate the CICA summit — an unfortunate fallout of most international meetings which both countries attend. That it has become a "key issue" at the conference is apparent from the fact that the Kazakh President, Mr Nursultan Nazarbaev, today subtly suggested to Mr Vajpayee during their one-on-one interaction that if India changed its mind about a meeting, he, as the host, would "facilitate" it. The Prime Minister "politely"

told him it was not needed as any amount of outside pressure would not make India yield till it had independently verified what it needed.

President Musharraf, who arrived here this evening, said he was prepared "unconditionally" to hold talks on the Kashmir issue with Mr Vajpayee during the security summit, adds AFP.

Turn to page 6

Britain fears influx

LONDON, June 3. — British home secretary Mr David Blunkett, will ask Europe to share the burden of an influx of up to 1,50,000 refugees from India and Pakistan if the two countries go to war. The government has reportedly drawn up emergency plans to deal with asylum-seekers. Although the foreign office estimates the number of British passport holders in the two countries to be no more than 21,000, at least six times as many have family links in this country and would see Britain as their natural refuge. — *The Times, London*

Soft stand, hard line

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, June 3. — India's stand appears to have softened slightly in recent days, particularly with coercive diplomatic actions apparently successful and the Western powers cracking down on Islamabad.

(But the Union home minister, Mr LK Advani has again expressed doubts as to whether international pressure on Pakistan to stop exporting terrorism will have any effect. He suggested economic sanctions against Islamabad, adds PTI. Meanwhile, high alert for the services contin-

ues with Army officers attached to the NCC and other institutions being sent to units.)

"There is some softening of position," defence sources said,

While the MoD rules out the use of nuclear weapons and talks of a 'mature' response to another Kaluchak, Advani suggests economic sanctions against Islamabad

pointing out a shift in Mr George Fernandes' position. In an interview, he had said India would react strongly if another Kaluchak happened. In Singapore, he spoke of not being impulsive — a slight,

but distinct change of stance.

Another official pointed out last Saturday the response to another Kaluchak-type massacre would be "mature". He said India would not go to a war just because militants have struck again.

Clearly, the emphasis would be on diplomacy, and the imminent arrival of senior US diplomats is a sign that the West has woken up to cross-border terrorism.

Visits by top US officials show their interest in solving the problem is increasing.

It started with Ms Christina Rocca, and Mr Richard Armitage and Mr Donald Rumsfeld are due to arrive in Delhi.

MoD on buying spree

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, June 1. — As the sabre-rattling between India and Pakistan is continuing, the defence ministry is looking to acquire new sabres: weapons for the Armed Forces.

The first T-90 tanks have just arrived and have been a morale-booster for the forces. The ministry has stockpiled huge quantities of shells for the 155MM Bofors guns for the artillery. Also, India has asked for thermal imaging systems, sensors and light weapons for commandos. More sophisticated weapons are coming in. They include:

- Green Pine radars from Israel
- The Airborne Warning and Control Systems or the AWACS, the long-awaited eye in the sky. This will allow forces to better respond to possible attacks. This will be supplied by the Russians and the Israelis. The plane will be the Russian Il-76, while the Israeli Phalcon radar is likely to be purchased.
- Spares for the Sea King helicopters and the Harrier jump jet fighters for the Navy from the US. Only about a

third of the copters and fighters are in operational readiness because of the lack of spares.

■ The GE-404 engines for the Light Combat Aircraft are now coming from the USA.

■ The Hawk advanced jet trainer is also likely now that the British have clarified that there is no embargo on its sale. About 66 are to be purchased.

■ India has already signed a deal for the purchase of weapon-locating radars from the US. They will be here by 2004. A defence official said that they should have been purchased by 1997.

■ The price negotiation committee for the purchase of the Russian aircraft carrier, Admiral Gorshkov, has just been formed. It will continue negotiations for 4-6 weeks before arriving at a price. Then, it may be bought.

■ But the P-3 Orion plane for the Navy is not on the agenda immediately. The Navy believes that it is too expensive and for that price, could get something more necessary. For the moment, the Kamov helicopters will do the reconnaissance necessary.

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THE STATESMAN

War threat downplayed

By Amit Baruah

SINGAPORE, MAY 31. The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, today downplayed the threat of war in South Asia by saying that Indian and Pakistani troops had been facing each other on the border for the past six months but there had not been "any incident".

Mr. Fernandes, who met the U.S. Deputy Defence Secretary, Paul Wolfowitz, for more than an hour, told *The Hindu*: "For the last nearly six months, our troops are there (on the border). Pakistani troops are also there. And there hasn't been any incident, which has triggered any hostilities. Therefore, one need not be worried on this count."

Earlier, talking to presspersons, he referred to the fact that Indian and Pakistani troops had been in an eyeball-to-eyeball situation for the past six months. "So, I don't think one need worry just now about what's likely to happen."

In brief remarks to the press,

Mr. Wolfowitz said that the U.S. was "very much opposed to cross-border terrorism" when asked whether Pakistan's support for the battle against Al-Qaeda was restricting Washington from putting greater pressure on the Pakistani President, Pervez Musharraf, to end cross-border terrorism.

However, he hastened to add that Washington did not believe that war was the solution. "War in the subcontinent has the potential to do untold damage to India, to Pakistan, to the whole world."

Mr. Wolfowitz felt that the tension had come at a particularly "tragic time" because the U.S. had inaugurated a "new year" of relations with not just Pakistan, but also India.

Referring to his meeting with Mr. Wolfowitz, Mr. Fernandes said the discussions were focussed on the situation prevailing in South Asia.

"He wanted to know the latest situation and that was conveyed to him."

To a question on what more the U.S. could do to put pressure on Pakistan, Mr. Fernandes said, "It is U.S. generosity in releasing funds from the IMF, World Bank and from other similar agencies that keeps Musharraf going. To make such funds available when the person talks of a jihad against India and using the nuclear weapon and has no qualms in exporting terrorists to India is something on which we need to ponder and take appropriate steps."

To a question if India was amenable to a reported British suggestion to deploy an international monitoring force on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC), Mr. Fernandes said, "There is enough evidence that has been presented to the whole world and (the) U.S. has similar evidence of the manner in which terrorists are crossing."

Mr. Fernandes, who arrived in Singapore from New Delhi this morning, also met the Philippine Defence Secretary, Angelo Reyes, the Singapore Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister, Tony Tan, the Malaysian Defence Minister, Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak, and a delegation of U.S. Senators and Congresspersons.

Gujral suggests PM, Musharraf meet in Almaty

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, MAY 31. Without advocating immediate talks, the former Prime Minister, Inder Kumar Gujral, has proposed an "ice breaking" meeting between the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, on the sidelines of next week's international security summit in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Visibly concerned about the possible repercussions of the on-going Indo-Pak. military stand-off, Mr. Gujral, in an exclusive interview to *The Hindu*, was emphatic that the Prime Minister could utilise a preliminary contact with Gen. Musharraf to "highlight the common threat posed by terrorism to the civil society of both India and Pakistan. We should then wait for his (President Musharraf's)

response" before taking any further step.

Mr. Gujral felt that the Prime Minister should, on the margins of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), hold crucial bilateral discussions with the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, and, if possible, with the Chinese President, Jiang Zemin, apart from engaging the Central Asian heads at Almaty. "All diplomatic options have to be exhausted. War is a desperate last option," he observed. Advocating a three-stage "road map" that can lead to a phased reduction of tensions between India and Pakistan, Mr. Gujral felt that "participants in Almaty can make Pakistan understand that terrorism like chastity is indivisible."

Details on Page 12

Meeting ruled out

NEW DELHI, MAY 31. India today ruled out any meeting between the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, on the sidelines of a security conference in Kazakhstan next week but said Mr. Vajpayee was expected to hold bilateral talks with the Russian leader, Vladimir Putin, and the Chinese President, Jiang Zemin.

"There is no question of Mr. Vajpayee meeting Gen. Musharraf. There is no possibility of a Tashkent II," the Special Secretary in the External Affairs Ministry, R.M. Abhyankar, said while briefing presspersons here on the Prime Minister's four-day visit to Almaty from June 2. — PTI

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THE HINDU

THE CHALLENGE OF CHILD LABOUR

J. Laban & S. Selvaraj pp. 10 1976

AMONG THE SOCIAL failures for which the country has been unable to find a meaningful solution, child labour is one of the worst. Linked with this failure are several other social weaknesses that have pushed generations of hapless children into work in the past and continue to keep the ranks of the little labourers swelling. Seen against this backdrop, the announcement that the Government proposes to double its allocation for eradicating child labour is welcome. However, stepping up the availability of resources only marks part of a long corrective process and by itself provides no cause for comfort that all will be well in the years to come. For, the issue to be addressed is not merely stopping children from working, but other related ones such as primary education, the rural-urban divides, poverty-related issues and those relating to economic inequality. Added to these commonly accepted factors that propel child labour across the world is the distinctly Indian attribute of caste and social structures. An additional factor in what is bound to be a long battle is the overlap of all these causes, making the task of elimination easier said than done.

In a way, India's responses to child labour have been paradoxical. Though in the forefront of Asian countries in terms of assessing the problem — the first detailed investigation was conducted in the late 1920s — and in terms of enacting legislation — a framework of rules was in place in 1933 — in showing results, the nation has fallen short of expectations. One of the most commonly attributed causes for the poor result has been the failure to make primary education universal, Kerala being a notable and healthy exception. The poor school infrastructure conditions, the inability to arrest the dropout rates at the primary level and, more important, parental thinking, have all worked together forcing the child out of the classroom to the workplace. Though it is recognised

that the first step to ending child labour is by making primary education compulsory, the Indian response suffers from a colossal failure on this front. Moreover, instances of the use of child labour go unreported, many times deliberately so, making the task more complicated. With the exact magnitude of the problem a matter of debate, more time is spent on finding the numbers than in finding a mechanism that can end the practice.

The continuing lack of clarity in the approach to combat child labour — as is evident through the arguments by some for the abolitionist route and still others for alleviation — reflects the contradictions that continue to confront policy makers. Nowhere is this contradiction more exposed than in maintaining distinctions between hazardous and non-hazardous work for children. Clearly, the path to complete eradication of child labour will imply that such distinctions are done away with at the earliest. Arguments often made in favour of employment of children in non-hazardous work deflect from the important point that the bartering away of childhood scars the individual irreparably. The way out of the tragic social malady is economic development, though the Indian experience has defied even this argument. For economic development to make a meaningful change for the country's children, a substantial stepping up of resources for education is a necessary precondition, especially in rural areas where the problem goes unnoticed. A more important change required is in the mindset of adults who willingly send their children to work. To make this change effectively, issues relating to economic deprivation have to be addressed as well. The decision by the International Labour Organisation to bring child labour under sharper international focus by observing the first World Day Against Child Labour last week should galvanise the individual and national efforts to rid India of this debilitating social iniquity.

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'India determined but not impulsive'

By Amit Baruah

P. Srinivasan
HOT 101
SINGAPORE, JUNE 2. The Defence Minister George Fernandes, came close to giving an assurance to the international community that India would not attack Pakistan as feared when he said today that New Delhi "will not be impulsive" in dealing with cross-border terrorism.

Mr. Fernandes made the remarks at the closing session of the Asia Security Conference after extensive interaction with the U.S. Deputy Defence Secretary, Paul Wolfowitz.

Right through the three-day conference, Mr. Fernandes has been engaged with Mr. Wolfowitz. They are known to have had at least two meetings — one formal and the other informal. Even this morning at the conference, the extent of Indo-U.S. engagement became clear when Mr. Wolfowitz walked across to where Mr. Fernandes was sitting and whispered something into his ear. Soon afterwards, Mr. Fernandes left the conference hall and went to his room in the Shangri La hotel — which also happens to be the venue of the meeting, organised by the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS).

What transpired between the two is not immediately clear, but senior officials confirmed to this correspondent that the U.S. was actively engaged in pressuring Pakistan to offer some "immediately verifiable" step that it has stopped aiding cross-border terrorism.

Without saying it, the U.S. is playing mediator. "If the U.S. is successful in pressuring Pakistan, then a cooling of tensions is possible," the officials said.

In his speech and while answering questions, Mr. Fernandes said: "I don't see the

likelihood of any kind of escalation (with Pakistan) which takes us to the extreme." India, he said, had never begun a war with Pakistan and all the four wars had been imposed upon New Delhi. He "cannot visualise" a situation where any action that India took would get out of hand. He made it clear that India had asked the U.S. to stop the flow of funds to Pakistan till Islamabad put a stop to sponsoring terrorism into India.

Referring to the May 14 Kaluchak killings, Mr. Fernandes said India was "angry and anguished" at the incident. "The pressure on our Prime Minister to launch an attack on the terrorists is intense. But we held back — only to have Abdul Gani Lone, a voice of moderation in the politics of Kashmir, assassinated by terrorists. India is focussed on terrorism — with determination. We are not threatening the territorial integrity of Pakistan, nor do we have any animus against the people of Pakistan. We have resolved to address the problem of terrorism both tactically and strategically. All we expect of the Musharraf regime is that it desist from supporting terrorism," he said.

Mr. Fernandes, who was repeatedly urged by speaker after speaker to ensure that India continued to exercise restraint, said that there was, perhaps, a need to change the semantics of war when we address terrorism.

"India has been grappling with the challenge of terrorism for many years. We recognise that the military is only one of many tools in the quiver of State and society...short-term interests should not allow countries to make imprudent choices. In this specific case, I believe the global community, led by the U.S., can prevail upon

Pakistan to live up to its responsibilities to the global community and its commitment to the U.N. Security Council Resolution 1373 (which enjoins States not to support terrorism, among other things). This is the cooperation we seek from those who advise India to be restrained," Mr. Fernandes said.

Surveying the Asian security scene, the Defence Minister said China, Japan, India and Russia had a "crucial role" to play in fostering regional cooperation in the Asian continent. "We also view China as a crucial peg of the emerging security and political architecture of Asia. Much of Asia's security future will depend on the way China's leadership shapes its policies regarding many of its neighbouring countries. China has embarked upon a path of rapid modernisation and ambitious economic growth. It is our hope that economic development in China will help it to play a benign role in all Asian matters, including the peaceful settlement of its boundary disputes with some countries in the region," he said.

On India's nuclear posture, he said, "India's nuclear weapons' capability is meant only for self-defence and seeks to ensure that India's independence and integrity are not threatened by any misconceived plan of nuclear aggression. India will not get drawn into a nuclear arms race."

After the conference, Mr. Fernandes held meetings with the Defence Ministers of Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Indonesia. It has been agreed that the "Asia Security Conference" is to become an annual affair providing a forum to Asian Defence Ministers to meet with their counterparts from Europe and the U.S.. The next meeting will take place in Singapore in May 2003.

03 JUN 2002

THE HINDU

India warned against 'tampering with' MiG-27s

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, APRIL 28. Russian aircraft manufacturers have cautioned India against upgrading their warplanes with the help of third countries. "India's current effort to upgrade the MiG-27 fighter jets in cooperation with Israel is wrong strategy," Vladimir Barkovsky, First Deputy Head of the MiG corporation, said.

"When people start tampering with an aircraft they did not build this may lead to disastrous consequences," Mr. Barkovsky cited the example of Romania, which had contracted Israel to modernise its fleet of 100 MiG-21 planes. The result was disappointing, with Romania losing 14 of the upgraded planes in recent air crashes.

Last week a Romanian Air Force delegation was in Moscow to discuss the situation with MiG manufacturers. He says his company has repeatedly offered to prepare a comprehensive upgrade programme for India's fleet of some 130 MiG-27s, but India eventually opted in favour of an Israeli proposal. "Ours would be a far more efficient modernisation than what India is now doing jointly with Israel," Mr. Barkovsky told *The Hindu*.

The Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. is currently refitting the IAF's 125 MiG-21 fighters on the basis of a Russian upgrade package using sets of Russia-supplied equipment. The upgrade will turn the vintage third-generation fighter jet into a fourth-generation fighter jet and extend its service life for another 15 years. The upgraded MiG-21-23 is far more superior to the F-7PG China has supplied to Pakistan earlier this year.

"The F-7, built on the basis of an early version of MiG-21, is inferior to India's MiG-21 and is no match at all for the MiG-21-23 in terms of armament and ability to engage air and ground targets," Mr. Barkovsky said. Russian experts blame the high rate of MiG-21 crashes in India on a lack of advanced jet trainer with the IAF.

"You can't teach a man to drive a car and expect him to be able to pilot a plane too," Mr. Barkovsky remarked. The MiG-AT advanced jet trainer, powered by two French Larzac engines, came close to winning a tender for the supply of 66 AJT planes to the IAF, but due to repeated delays in induction the Russian plane eventually lost to the British Hawk. The MiG corporation still thinks its trainer

would be a better choice for India, especially considering its decision to install Larzac engines on the ingenious HJT-36 trainer.

"The single-engine HJT-36 for intermediate pilot training will make a perfect match with the twin-engine MiG-AT for advanced piloting," Mr. Barkovsky said. "Such compatibility is not possible in the case of the single-engine Hawk, whose engine cannot be used for HJT-36."

Development of new jet

The Russian Government has given the green light to the development of a fifth generation fighter jet jointly with India. A government commission for defence industry on Friday declared the Sukhoi aircraft company winner in a tender to develop the new warplane.

The MiG corporation and Yakovlev Design Bureau, which had also bid for the project, will now join forces with Sukhoi in Russia's most ambitious defence project since the break-up of the Soviet Union 10 years ago.

Russia has already offered to pool resources to jointly develop and build the fifth generation fighter jet intended to compete with the Joint Strike Force (JSF) fighter being developed in the United States.

29 APR 2002

PM briefs President as border tension mounts

TIMES NEWS NETWORK AND AGENCIES

New Delhi: Even as Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee held a high-level meeting on Thursday to review the situation along the Indo-Pak border, militants intensified their attacks on security installations in Jammu and Kashmir. The two-hour meeting was attended by home minister L.K. Advani, defence minister George Fernandes and external affairs minister Jaswant Singh. The leaders apparently discussed the various options before the country in dealing with Pakistan.

Addressing mediapersons, Mr Singh said the meeting was not limited to the military situation, but that a number of other issues had also come up. However, there was no change in Mr Vajpayee's Kazakhstan tour programme. The PM is slated to leave for Almaty on June 2 for a two-day conference on confidence-building measures in Asia.

Later in the day, Mr Vajpayee met President K.R. Narayanan for about 45 minutes and briefed him on the current Indo-Pak standoff and the diplomatic drive that the

government had launched to apprise the world community of the situation.

Meanwhile, even as heavy exchange of fire continued between the armies of the two countries along the international border and the Line of Control, militants struck at vital locations in Sopore, Doda and Kokranag districts. In the last 24 hours, encounters between policemen and ultras have claimed the lives of two policemen and five militants.

On Wednesday night, two suspected Lashkar-e-Toiba militants attired in police uniforms stormed the Doda district police lines after shooting dead the sentry. The ultras also killed an unarmed policeman. However, the duo was later trapped in a ration store and killed on Thursday.

Meanwhile, in Islamabad, Gen Pervez Musharraf said a war would break out only if India initiated it. Denying reports that troops had been redeployed from the western border with Afghanistan to the eastern flank with India, Gen Musharraf said such a move was only being considered.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

31 MAY 2002

TIME FOR FITTING RESPONSE WAS AFTER 13 DEC'

Retaliation chance missed, says PM

Statesman News Service

MANALI, May 26. — The Prime Minister, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, admitted for the first time today that India had lost the chance of launching a surprise attack on Pakistan. The time for a fitting response to Pakistan's misadventure would have been immediately after the 13 December attack on Parliament, Mr Vajpayee said.

Warning the world that "India's patience is running out" in its fight against terrorism, the Prime Minister, in a not-so-optimistic reference to the on-going interaction with world leaders to find a solution, said: "The world tells us that we are right and that cross-border terrorism should stop. The world also tells us to exercise restraint, but how long and how much can we tolerate?"

He said Pakistan was not satisfied with the Partition and now wanted to divide Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a public meeting to launch the construction of Rohtang tunnel, Mr Vajpayee called upon the people to maintain unity and be prepared for sacrifice in the event of a "crisis".

Referring to the terrorist attack in Kaluchak and the brutal killing of women and children, he said: "We want to end this game of blood".

Mr Vajpayee reviewed security along the border with the defence minister, Mr George Fernandes, adds a PTI report. He was briefed by the National Security Adviser, Mr Brajesh Mishra, on his meeting with the Atomic Energy Commission yesterday. Mr Fernandes briefed the Prime Minister on the latest ground situation in forward areas.

Farooq rues inaction: Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mr Farooq Abdullah

today said India's "inaction" across the LoC to counter Pakistan-sponsored terrorism signalled it was weak.

Addressing a seminar in Jammu, he said China had been using Pakistan against India while continuing to talk of friendly relations with Delhi. "But it is ironical that our government has not extended any support to the Dalai Lama nor did we make any protest when Tibet



Mr Vajpayee at Manali on Sunday. — AFP

'The world tells us that we are right and that cross-border terrorism must stop, but how long can we tolerate?'

was taken over by China."

"The message down the line is that we are a weak nation and do not have the guts," Mr Abdullah said, reacting to General Pervez Musharraf's reported remark that "empty vessel sounds much".

"I want to see when we react... I do not want war because it leads to destruction. But how long we will get killed and accept deaths."

The Prime Minister, who laid the foundation stone for the Rohtang Tunnel, said: "Our developmental work will not stop, whatever the situation." Development and defence go together, and the Rohtang tunnel project was an example, he said.

Pak shelling: Five persons were killed and eight injured as Pakistani troops indulged in mortar firing and heavy shelling of villages in the RS Pura sector late last night, adds PTI from Jammu.

In retaliation, Indian troops targeted three Pakistani posts across Karotona-kurd-Bega belt and damaged them. Authorities have evacuated 10,000 villagers from the border areas of Ramgarh sub-sector.

Mortar shelling along the International Border was also reported from Londi, Pangrain, Rajpura, Mawa and Samba sectors in Jammu and Kathua districts.

Three militants, including a foreign mercenary, were killed in separate encounters in Jammu division while two civilians were hurt in an IED blast since last evening.

A Lashkar-e-Taiyaba militant was killed in an encounter with the Army in Pulwama district late last night.

In Bandipora area of Baramulla district, three Army personnel were injured when militants detonated an IED today.

In an apparent fallout of the killing of Abdul Ghani Lone, the Jammu and Kashmir IG (Security), Mr Ashok Bhan has been shifted as the director of Sher-e-Kashmir Police Academy in Udhampur. Mr Bhan was transferred on Friday and the ADG, Mr PS Gill, was given charge of the post.

In the biggest seizure in recent months, the Army today unearthed three militant arms dumps in the two border districts of Kupwara and Baramulla.

THE STATESMAN

27 MAY 2002

RS. 6165 CRORE PACKAGE FOR JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Border situation tense, challenging: PM

By Luv Puri

SRINAGAR, MAY 23. The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, today described the condition on the border with Pakistan as tense and challenging and said India would not let Pakistan carry on with its proxy war any longer.

Addressing newsmen at the Shere-Kashmir International convention centre here, the Prime Minister said India had taken up the challenge thrown by its neighbour. He said his presence at today's meeting of the Unified Command here along with the Home Minister and the Defence Minister was to convey the message of India's resolve and readiness.

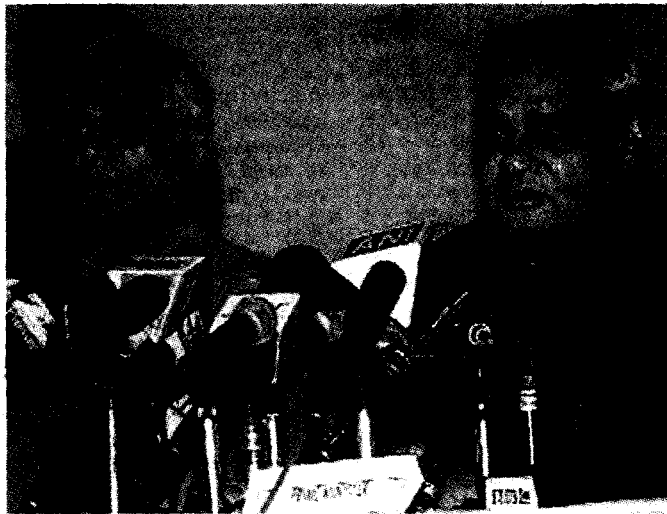
"There is no doubt that the situation on the border is tense and any challenge given to us will be met effectively."

Asked about his statement on the border on Tuesday when he had looked at the clear sky and said there was no sign of war clouds, Mr. Vajpayee said, "the sky may be clear but sometimes even when the sky is clear there is lightning."

The Home Minister, L.K. Advani, the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, the Minister of State for Home, Mr. I.D. Swami, and the Minister of State for External Affairs, Omar Abdullah, were with the Prime Minister at the news conference.

'Musharraf's deeds must match words'

About the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf's statement on Wednesday in which he sought to send out conciliatory signals to India saying that Pakistan's soil would never be used for cross-border terrorism, the Prime Minister said, "I do not believe his statements. I have been disappointed with his statements. In the past too promises had been made and broken. Therefore his (Musharraf's) deeds should match his words."



The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, at a press conference in Srinagar on Thursday. — Photo: Nissar Ahmad

He assured the people of Jammu and Kashmir that free and fair Assembly elections would be held. Mr. Vajpayee said his only worry was that "our neighbour will try its best to sabotage the coming elections, but we will certainly take all necessary precautions." On his three-day visit to the State, he said, "What I have observed here is that the people of the State are yearning for peace. There is a desire for normality."

On his meetings with the po-

litical leaders of the State, he said, "I got a very good opportunity to talk to different political voices in the State."

Asked about his not meeting with the Hurriyat Conference during his visit, he said, "I have invited them again and again in the past to come and talk to us in the larger interests of the people of the State." He said it was for this purpose that he had appointed K.C. Pant. But during Mr. Pant's visit to the State the Hurriyat Conference boycotted

him. (An agency report quoted the Hurriyat Chairman, Abdul Gani Bhat, as saying while rejecting the offer for talks: "Why indulge in fishing in a desert?")

"I invite to New Delhi anyone who has anything concrete to offer to bring peace to the State so that its people are safe and live happily," the Prime Minister said. The Hurriyat's insistence of including Pakistan in the talks on Kashmir was the stumbling block for initiating any talks with it. Describing the assassination of the Hurriyat leader, Abdul Gani Lone, as a conspiracy to demoralise and silence the forces of peace, the Prime Minister said Lone was gunned down because of his courageous voice against the gun culture, a voice that was beginning to get more and more influential.

'People want development'

Stressing the need for development in the State, the Prime Minister said, "the impression which I have got in the last three days is that the people here want development and employment opportunities."

Announcing a comprehensive package of Rs. 6165 crores for the State, the Prime Minister said the package covered various aspects of development and security with a thrust on generation of new employment opportunities for the youth of the State and relief for migrants affected by militancy and cross-border shelling.

He said that in five years the people of Kashmir would have train service. The 287 KM Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail line would be completed by that time at a cost of Rs. 3600 crores.

Today's Unified Command Headquarters meet was presided over by the Prime Minister and was participated by Mr. Advani, Mr. Fernandes, Dr. Abdullah, Omar Abdullah, the 16 Corps Go CJBS Yadava, the 15 Corps GoC, Patankar, and senior police officers.

CCS reviews security situation

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, MAY 23. The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), headed by the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, today took stock of the security situation on the borders after evaluating a variety of inputs that it had received from Government agencies.

Briefing the media after the meeting, the External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, indicated that India was not taking assertions by the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, on curbing terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir at face value. He pointed out that Gen. Musharraf's statement was "no different" from his commitments that had been spelt out in his January 12 televised address. An assessment of Gen. Musharraf's statement could only be made after its translation into practical action on the ground.

It's time for decisive action: PM Don't ignore India's resolve to fight terror, Pak warned

TIMES NEWS NETWORK AND AGENCIES

Kupwara: Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee sent out a strong message to Pakistan on Wednesday saying the time had come for decisive action against cross-border terrorism.

Addressing troops here, he said, "Nobody should think that the threshold of our tolerance has no limits. The time has come where direct action is required to be taken against the enemy. India is being forced to fight a war thrust on it and we will emerge victorious. Let there be no doubt about it."

"The world understands that we have been suffering but they are not coming out with their views openly. Hence, we have to defend ourselves, we are ready for that," he said.

"My arrival here is indicative of something. Whether our neighbour understands it or not, whether the world takes note of it or not, history will recall that we will write a new chapter of victory," he added.

Reacting to Mr Vajpayee's statement, Pakistan said it had taken serious exception to it and added that any declaration of war by India would be a major miscalculation, leading to grave consequences.

A statement by the Pakistan foreign office in Islamabad noted, "The Indian leadership should desist from such blatant war-mongering and instead focus on addressing their internal problems as well as resolving peacefully their many disputes with their neighbours."

Another statement issued after Gen Pervez Musharraf met with a joint session of the national security council and the cabinet said Pakistan was prepared to defend itself against any Indian attack, but called for negotiations and vowed to maintain a crackdown on terrorism.

It said "no organisation in Pakistan will be allowed to indulge in terrorism in the name of Kashmir" but added that Pakistan would continue to extend "moral, political and diplomatic support to the legitimate struggle of the people of Jammu and Kashmir".

As the two sides continued with their war rhetoric, Britain warned of a "real and very disturbing" possibility of a nuclear conflict between the two

Warships moved to west coast

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The navy has moved five frontline warships of the eastern naval fleet to conjoin the western naval fleet in view of the Indo-Pak stand-off.

The navy had carried out a similar shifting of warships during the 1971 Indo-Pak war and the 1999 Kargil conflict. It had effectively bottled up Karachi harbour during the 1971 war.

The warships moved to the western coast include a 'Kashin' class missile destroyer, a multi-purpose frigate and three missile corvettes. They have been placed under the "administrative and operational control" of the flag officer commanding-in-chief of the western naval command.

neighbours and decided to send foreign secretary Jack Straw to New Delhi and Islamabad next week to try to stop the two countries from sliding into war.

In a chilling assessment of the escalating tensions in the subcontinent, Mr Straw said, "The possibility of war is real and very disturbing. This is a crisis the world cannot ignore."

In New Delhi, the Congress Working Committee adopted a political resolution broadly supporting the government's efforts in tackling the heightened tension on the border. Unlike during the Kargil war, when the Congress' response was measured, this time around the main opposition party has decided not to be lacking in its support for any measure the government may deem fit.

Meanwhile, the BJP asked the nation to back the government "in its final war against terrorism and also be ready to respond totally as the situation warrants". Matching the PM's rhetoric in Kupwara, the BJP passed a resolution saying the nation had already responded and that the country could "no longer countenance patience in view of the continuous cross-border terrorism."

Tour de force — Sights and sounds



Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee takes in the scene from an army base in Kupwara, 25 km from the Pakistan border, on Wednesday. Mr Vajpayee was being shown arms captured from militants earlier. Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Farooq Abdullah looks on (extreme right).

'Lashkar behind Lone's killing'

Srinagar: The Pakistan-based terrorist outfit Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) is behind the killing of senior Hurriyat Conference leader Abdul Gani Lone, official sources said here on Wednesday night.

Quoting messages from across the border intercepted by security agencies, the sources said the intercepted conversation between Abu Hadid operating in Srinagar and a control station of the LeT in Pakistan revealed it was Hadid who was responsible for Mr Lone's killing at a rally here on Tuesday.

The sources said Hadid accomplished the task along with two other

LeT terrorists, Abu Hamza and Abu Rahel, both Pakistani nationals.

Hadid was advised by LeT operational commander in the Valley Abu Samas not to claim responsibility publicly for Mr Lone's killing and support the strike call in protest against the incident.

The coded message from across the border expressed happiness at the killing and asked Samas to be watchful of the situation, the sources said.

Meanwhile, the Hurriyat Conference on Wednesday demanded a judicial probe into Mr Lone's killing and security for the slain leader's family members. PH

Don't ignore India's resolve to fight terror, Pak warned

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Warning Pakistan against looking at the current situation as a mere racketing up of tension, India on Wednesday said its patience with terrorism had been exhausted and it would not allow matters to continue in the same vein.

In an echo of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's strong message in Kupwara, external affairs ministry spokesperson Nirupama Rao said India's stance had been conveyed to Pakistan's high commissioner Ashraf Jahangir Qazi, who made a courtesy farewell call on foreign secretary Chokila Iyer on Wednesday.

Giving details of the meeting between Mr Qazi and Ms Iyer, Ms Rao said, "Pakistan is still trying to ignore the mood and determination of

this country to fight terrorism. The high commissioner has been told that the December 13 attack marked a watershed in terms of sentiment. There is a feeling today that tolerance for terrorism has only encouraged more violence, and this must be crushed decisively."

According to her, the international community understood India's concerns and did not believe Pakistan's denial of its involvement in cross-border terrorism.

The European Union's external affairs commissioner Chris Patten, who will arrive here on Thursday, is likely to hold meetings with the Indian leadership on Friday. Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov spoke to external affairs minister Jaswant Singh and expressed his concern over rising tensions in the region.

Britain withdraws officials from Pak

By Rashmee Z. Ahmed
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

London: In a move that is being read by some as a clear criticism of Gen Pervez Musharraf's professed crackdown on militants, Britain on Wednesday withdrew more than 150 diplomats from Pakistan for security reasons on account of "terrorist outrages and internal threats".

The withdrawal came within hours of British foreign secretary Jack Straw's publicly-stated decision to lead an emergency mission to the sub-continent early next week because of the disturbing possibility of a war. Besides, the move comes within days of David Manning, Prime Minister Tony Blair's chief foreign policy advisor, giving a firm lecture to the Pakistani authorities. Mr Manning is a

hard-hitting and experienced former ambassador to Nato and Israel.

Announcing the decision to call back its officials, Mr Straw emphasised that the move was a matter of public record and on account of security within Pakistan, and was not directly related to the situation along the Line of Control. Mr Straw also maintained that he had not criticised the Pakistani authorities.

However, in an indication of open disagreement between London and Islamabad, Pakistan's high commissioner here Abdul Kader Jaffer contested Mr Straw's reading of the situation. Mr Jaffer said British diplomats were being withdrawn on account of both perceived terrorist threats and the Kashmir situation, for which he blamed India.

India consulting war book, says Advani

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Our Political Bureau
NEW DELHI 20 MAY

UNION home minister L K Advani on Monday said the steps taken over the last 48 hours are part of the plan government has put in place following the "War Book."

Mr Advani's statement confirms the speculation that para-military forces and Coast Guard under Army and Navy respectively were being placed as a preparatory step towards launching a military offensive against Pakistan.

The war book, a highly confidential document, contains the records of past wars including battle plans, strategies and actions of both the sides, and is maintained at the headquarters of all regiments. It is usually consulted only when the Army gets into the battle mode. The Union home minister's candour in stating that the war book was being consulted comes despite that he had refused to disclose the strategy during the debate on Jammu and Kashmir in Par-

liament. Even as the Opposition criticised him for not revealing much about the steps the government intended to take in response to the massacre of 34 people in Kaluchak by Pakistani terrorists, Mr Advani withstood the pressure and kept his cards close to his chest.

On Monday, however, the Union home minister disclosed before the media that the nation was on the warpath. This itself, as Mr Advani said at an inauguration of a charity centre here, points to a change in strategy vis-a-vis Pakistan.



Advani

At the function on Monday morning, he said the government firmly believed "the way we are retaliating (against Pakistan-sponsored terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir) will have to be changed." He said the government, after consulting the armed forces, would go ahead and win the proxy war "like we did in 1971." However, he did not elaborate whether the offensive would be in the form of limited strikes on the camps spread across Pakistan-occupied Kashmir or a full-scale war.

THE STATESMAN

21 MAY 2002

CREDIBLE NUCLEAR DETERRENT IN PLACE: AEC CHIEF

Advani hints at war, invokes '71

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, May 20. — In a significant conjunction of events today, Mr LK Advani indicated that the government had amended its strategy to deal with Pakistan-backed terrorism, while Mr Anil Kakodkar, secretary in the atomic energy department, said the country had a credible nuclear deterrent and was ready to face any threats.

The government also said it would aggressively lobby the international community to "sensitise it" to the pain inflicted upon India by the cross-border terrorism.

The Union home minister said: "The government is of the firm belief that the way we're retaliating will have to be changed. We're moving in a certain direction. The issue was discussed at length in Parliament and later with the Army. Government could go ahead and win, like we did in 1971... The fight against terrorism has been continuing for a long time, but the situation has to change. We'll win the battle."

Shifting gears into war-like mode, he said, was part of the new strategy. The administration has been asked to consult the *War Book*, a manual that details how various organs of the military and civil administration should coordinate during war. It contains the daily records of past wars, including battle plans, strategies and

actions taken by both sides.

Dr Kakodkar, also chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, said the country was ready to face any situation. Scientists had been able to work successfully on the entire range of nuclear deterrence, including the thermonuclear device.

The armed forces have spoken of a triad that comprises missiles with nuclear warheads,

planes that can deliver nuclear weapons and submarines that can launch nuclear devices. The third option is not ready, but there are enough missiles and planes for delivery systems.

The country's nuclear command is being readied and could be announced this month. This will initially be headed by an Air Marshal who will report to Lt-Gen Pankaj Joshi, chief of the integrated defence staff. The chain of command is being worked out by the defence ministry and PMO. The political leadership will, however, decide on the use of these weapons.

India today declared it was entitled to take all steps required to fight terrorism and said the countries urging re-

straint should "look to the other side of the fence", PTI adds.

Rupee slides: The tension took its toll on the rupee that closed at Rs 49.0250/0350 a dollar today, a 1-1/2 paise decline over last Friday's finish.

More reports on page 6

Vajpayee with a message to J&K

NEW DELHI, May 20. — Government strategists are looking at the Prime Minister's J&K visit, especially his 22 May engagements in the Valley, as an opportunity to convey a "forceful and emotionally powerful message to the people". Sources said "creating the atmospherics" will be as important as the political and strategic aspects of the visit.

Mr LK Advani won't accompany the Prime Minister to J&K tomorrow because of security reasons. He'll go straight to Srinagar on 23 May to attend the unified command meeting to be chaired by Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee. The government felt the two top functionaries shouldn't be away from the Capital together. Besides, officials opposed the idea of Mr Vajpayee and Mr Advani flying in the same plane. — SNS

Army camp raided, two killed

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, May 20. — Militants attacked yet another Army camp at Manjakote in Rajouri last night killing two security personnel. The attack comes less than 24 hours since a Pakistan-backed suicide squad struck an Army camp in Udhampur, killing four jawans.

Police said two ultras attacked the camp with heavy arms and ammunition. Two securitymen, including a jawan, were killed on the spot and two Special Police Officers injured.

An Army patrol came under militants' fire at Laloor village in Doda yesterday. A CRPF havaldar, SP Singh, was killed and two SPOs were injured. A BSF jawan was killed when ultras attacked a patrol at Botachul in Anantnag.

Exchange of fire: Six Pakistani soldiers were killed and about 10 bunkers destroyed when Indian forces retaliated against shelling from across the border, PTI adds. Heavy exchange of fire continued till this morning in Poonch and Rajouri sectors.

Ultras killed: Three ultras were killed in Kupwara, Baramulla and Badgam today.

THE STATESMAN

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India in hit-back mode, seeks Russia's backing

New Delhi: India on Sunday night warned Pakistan of retaliatory action if it violated the sanctity of the border.

"The Indian army shall conduct immediate retaliatory fire assaults every-time any such incidents are committed by Pakistan along the Line of Control (LoC) and the international border," external affairs minister Jaswant Singh told reporters after a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security chaired by Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee.

Asked whether the decision meant India was preparing for war with Pakistan, Mr Singh said, "You are reading what you have to read, I do what I have to do." The meeting also decided to place the paramilitary forces along the international boundary and the LoC under the operational command of the army and the coast guard under the navy. Asked as to whether any surgical strikes were being contemplated in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK), Mr Singh said, "I do not discuss plans of the



An army convoy heads for the border areas from Srinagar on Sunday.

armed forces. I do not comment on the imaginative reporting in the media.'

As war clouds gathered over the sub-continent, there were clear indications of India invoking provisions of the 1993 Friendship Treaty and the Strategic Partnership Declaration of 2000 with Russia, calling for urgent security consultations between the two countries.

Diplomatic and Russian official sources here confirmed that shortly after Saturday's meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security in New Delhi, Indian ambassador K. Raghunath called on Russian deputy foreign minister Alexander Losyukov for consultations.

The pacts provide for urgent consultations between the two countries in case of a threat to the security of any of them. They also provide for close coop-

- Paramilitary forces along border put under army's command
- Pakistan terms situation very dangerous
- Militants attack security camp in Udhampur, kill four
- Exchange of fire along LoC continues

eration in jointly removing this threat.

Although no official confirmation of resorting to these bilateral security mechanisms has been made, the Kremlin officials said a security dialogue between Moscow and New Delhi at various levels on core issues of national security and international terrorism was an ongoing process.

It is believed that Mr Raghunath passed on convincing proof of Pakistan's direct involvement in Tuesday's attack in Jammu and shared other sensitive information with Russia.

Pakistan on Sunday termed the situation along the border with India "very dangerous" and urged New Delhi to pull back its troops, even as troops from the two countries exchanged fire overnight along the LoC.

While Islamabad claimed that one person was killed in firing by Indian troops in PoK, Indian officials said Pakistani shelling killed one person and injured eight others in the Uri sector.

Pakistan-backed militants also raided a camp housing army and CRPF personnel in Udhampur, killing three jawans and a CRPF constable around 4 a.m. on Sunday. One of the militants was also killed in the attack.

"The situation is very dangerous. We had said earlier that troops should be pulled back from the borders. The Indian forces have been resorting to firing as a result of which a number of civilians have been killed. It is absolutely wrong. They should withdraw their troops from the borders and resolve all disputes through talks," Pakistan foreign office spokesman Aziz Ahmed Khan told BBC Radio.

He said there should be a de-escalation and lessening of tension and all disputes should be resolved through talks. "We are trying our level best to keep the situation under control and resolve all disputes through peaceful means," he said. Agencies

MILITARY MUSCLE

Flexed In A Different Way

By KEITH FLORY

It is not quite a re-run of the "phony war" of the last century, though it certainly is a new kind of mission for the Indian soldier. "Standing to" essentially to drive home a politico-diplomatic message. For even when the tension was at its height in January and February, the purely military objective of the massive post-13 December deployment on the Indo-Pak frontier was queried in several quarters. And the suicide-squad attack in Jammu has not provided the answer.

Now there are strong indications that the deployment will continue, at the minimum, till the completion of the elections in Jammu and Kashmir, as well as the polls in Pakistan if Musharraf adheres to his announced schedule. It is becoming apparent that the army is undertaking what in naval parlance is dubbed "gun-boat diplomacy." Keeping up the pressure on Pakistan, constantly reminding the international community that India has had enough of cross-border terrorism. But is that achieving anything?

No easy task

In keeping with their tradition of discipline and carrying out government directives, there are no signs of restlessness in the troops even as they endure tremendous hardships living under canvas in the scorching heat, and digging in to withstand the other kind of rigours that the monsoon will bring. An added headache being some of them having to rush away to help quell communal violence in Gujarat. Fortunately it is no longer an "eyeball to eyeball" stand-off. Without making a noise about it the army has undertaken some tactical re-deployment in what could loosely be termed the conflict-zone. Some of the headquarters' organisations have moved back to normal locations, soldiers are being selectively granted leave. "Well below panic stations, but well above peace-time configuration" is how an expert qualified the ground conditions.

That easing off — as distinct from relaxation — was essential for both the physical and mental condition of the troops. It also reduced the risk of an "accidental" flare-up, which is always possible when tension-levels are at a peak. The effort clearly is to step back from a fingers-on-the-trigger situation but not so far back as not to be able to strike at short notice.

The task is by no means easy. It has been officially stated that till 15 March the army had lost 176 men in Operation Parakaram as a result of mishaps in minefields, mishandling of ammunition and explosives, and traffic accidents. That is indeed a high price to pay for operations in which few shots have actually been fired at the adversary.

The financial implications are equally high. The ballpark figure for the initial

The author is Associate Editor,
The Statesman

deployment — much of it incurred on the massive transportation exercise — was Rs 18,000-20,000 crores. The finance minister estimated a recurring monthly expenditure of Rs 200 crore, the army would suggest a figure lower by Rs 50 crore. But those would be only the "running" costs, a lot of expensive equipment would also require replacement when the operation is eventually wound down.

way — aimed at evaluating and upgrading professional competence. Simultaneously sending out signals across the frontier that the pressure is being maintained.

It could certainly be a learning-experience for the army. Some of its battle-scarred veterans point out that no war has been fought for 30 years — they write off Kargil as a series of skirmishes,



Money comes into play — though it never truly compensates — in providing relief and assistance to the farmers along the border. Their land has been taken over, they missed harvesting the rabi crop and possibly will not be able to put down the kharif. The chief ministers of at least three border states — J&K, Punjab and Rajasthan — have expressed dissatisfaction at the rate of the payment.

Lack of impact

The only comfort on the financial front, indeed it is part of the overall pressure-game, is that the Pakistan economy — its troops are actively deployed too — would be harder hit than India's. It requires no Wall Street wizard to confirm that the absorption capacity of the Indian economy is substantially more than Pakistan's. Is it money well spent? That question cannot be answered at present, but when those concerned get down to answering it they would be required to abandon the slogan of "no price is too high to pay for national security."

In their own way the forces have gained from the deployment. Both the army and the air force have dovetailed into the deployment pattern a series of exercises — some might have been conducted any-

despite the media hype — and point to a whole crop of field commanders not having experienced "war conditions" which are vastly different from the present staple diet of the low-intensity conflict.

"We fought in 1948, 1962, 1965 and 1965. The barrels of our guns never cooled" one of them said recently. Adding that the "accidents" that cost 176 lives in Operation Parakaram was evidence of what he described as "inexperience."

Yet questions do arise about the impact of the deployment. Has the pressure been felt across the border? A resounding "no" would be the response if the yardstick was the continued infiltration of militants — including suspected unemployed elements of the Al Qaeda and Taliban networks — into Jammu and Kashmir. After all, the deployment was in response to the attack on Parliament House by Kashmiri militants.

The lack of impact on that specific front was confirmed by the defence minister in Parliament on 8 May. "There is no improvement in the cross-border terrorism abetted by Pakistan. Accordingly the government of India have decided that in order to meet any exigency it would be in the interest of the nation to continue the deployment of troops on

the border." Then came the massacre at Jammu.

If terrorism in J&K was not the sole yardstick the answer might be more positive. Senior defence officials maintain that a number of changes — perhaps none of them dramatic — can be seen in the internal functioning of the Pakistan army. A combination of international (read American) and Indian pressure has reduced the authority and influence of the *jehadi* generals. Which in the long run would be in India's interests.

Lost opportunity

It is widely accepted in military circles that India lost the opportunity to hit the terrorist training camps across the border by not launching swift surgical strikes immediately after 13 December. International opinion would have been favourable, even to the extent of accepting a substantial level of collateral damage.

Action at that stage might even have permitted the "re-drawing" of the Line of Control — in reality using military force to take control of pockets of PoK — that facilitate the infiltration of militants. A section of defence personnel also advocated taking the strategic Haji Pir Pass which would have drastically changed ground realities. That suggestion could have been rooted in emotion. The army cannot forget how the blood it shed for the Pass in 1965 was allowed to be drained away at Tashkent.

What does arouse some concerns in defence circles is that the factors which prevented pro-active measures, since the term offensive action might be unpalatable, could persist even after the elections in J&K. The Americans had made it pretty clear that they would not appreciate India's waging war since that would impact on their operations in Afghanistan. And there would also be apprehensions, and hence restraining efforts, over possible escalation into a nuclear conflict. This is the time to tell them that their troops stationed in Pakistan to protect Musharraf should in common prudence be withdrawn. The jury is still out on the value of the current deployment. Value that will have to be assessed in terms political and diplomatic rather than military. Perhaps its only visible value is that it is keeping Americans, and some others "interested" in the Indo-Pak situation. A de-escalation might either suggest that Musharraf has done enough to crack down on cross-border terrorism, or that India is not as indignant as it makes out to be.

Although many believe that the law of diminishing returns has set in, unilateral de-escalation without any specific gains is a difficult option. And certainly not one which fell within the soldier's ambit. Out there on the frontier the Indian army is actually being asked to proof-test the theory that the best army is the one that is so good that it never has to be used.

ANY PAK. SHELLING WILL BE RETALIATED: GOVT.

Army takes command of first tier of defence

By Atul Aneja

DS & Co. HO 1

NEW DELHI, MAY 19. Fine tuning its combat preparedness further, the Government has decided to place the paramilitary forces deployed along the border areas with Pakistan under the centralised command of the Army.

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), headed by the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, that met for the second day in succession for more than two hours, also decided to post the Coast Guard directly under the Navy.

By centralisation of the command of the paramilitary forces, that include the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), the Army has taken over the command of the first tier of defence along the International Border (IB) with Pakistan.

The paramilitary forces, especially the BSF, are deployed along the IB, including parts of the Jammu sector, close to the Chenab river.

The Army and not the paramilitary forces, in most cases, face Pakistani forces along the Line of Control (LOC) which stretches along most of the rest

of Jammu and Kashmir.

By taking command of the Coast Guard, the Navy will not only defend the high seas but also safeguard the coastal areas that straddle high value industrial complexes, especially along the west coast.

The defence forces have laid special emphasis on protecting the Bombay High, nuclear and other industrial installations that are located along the west coast.

Apart from the Army and the Navy, the Indian Air Force (IAF) is also looking at the nuts and bolts of putting maximum number of planes for combat operations along the western borders by drawing aviation assets from other sectors.

While the External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, who briefed the media after the CCS, indicated the Government's emphasis on enhancing military preparations, he nevertheless dismissed reports about the imminence of Army attacks on Pakistani Occupied Kashmir (PoK).

To a question, he said he did not wish to discuss the Army's operational plans, but added that reports suggesting attacks on PoK were "imaginative."

Sources here said that Pakistani forces and key Jehadi groups had been holding joint exercises in PoK, close to the LoC recently.

The Minister, however, stressed that the Army would retaliate sufficiently with its heavy weapons, that included artillery guns, to any Pakistani shelling, especially on civilian areas along the IB in the Jammu sector or along the LoC.

"Retaliatory fire by the 15 corps (based in Srinagar) and the 16 corps (Headquarters near Jammu) shall be conducted in any case of firing across the LoC or the IB", he said.

Mr. Singh took special note of the Pakistani firing on May 17 and 18 in which a village was targeted along the Jammu-Poonch alignment.

Mr. Singh acknowledged that India was considering additional diplomatic measures in case Pakistan did not restrain cross-border terrorism.

Any decision on the existing Most Favoured Nation (MFN) treatment to Pakistan can be taken only after the Commerce Minister, Murasoli Maran, who is now away from the capital, returns.

He further dismissed reports

that the upcoming meeting of Indian and Pakistani authorities on the Indus waters had been scrapped.

Four jawans killed in suicide attack

By Our Correspondent

JAMMU, MAY 19. Four Army personnel were killed and seven injured in a suicide attack by militants on an Army camp in the Udhampur region of Jammu today.

Police sources said three militants threw grenades on the camp, situated in the Chasna area of Mahore tehsil, early today.

The grenades hit a picket, killing a jawan. The militants then took up positions around the camp and started firing indiscriminately.

Two jawans sleeping in a rest room were killed and seven others injured.

The Army personnel regrouped and retaliated and a militant who had sneaked into the camp was killed. The other militants then withdrew and attacked a camp of the Central Reserve Police Force situated some hundred yards away from the Army camp.

A CRPF jawan was killed in the exchange of fire, but the militants escaped under the cover of darkness.

The injured jawans were rushed to hospital and the condition of three was said to be serious.

A report said the suicide squad belonged to the Lashkar-e-Taiba.

Security personnel have launched an operation to nab the militants and have cordoned off the surrounding hills.

In another incident, three BSF jawans were injured when their vehicle ran over an improvised explosive device on the Chenani-Gorikund road, near the historic Sudhmadev town. The vehicle was blown to pieces. The injured were rushed to the military hospital nearby.

THE HINDU

20 MAY 2002

Soft strike springs out of war room

29/5 - 2088 Devils

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, May 18: India today took a deliberate, though perhaps the softest, step to relaunch diplomatic assault on Pakistan, asking Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, Islamabad's high commissioner in New Delhi, to leave the country within a week. More such steps over the next few days are not being ruled out.

Qazi had already been marginalised after Delhi withdrew its high commissioner in Islamabad after the December 13 attack on Parliament. Since then, the foreign ministry had been communicating with Pakistan's deputy chief of mission Jalil Abbas Jilani.

Asking Qazi to leave only formalises the existing situation. The move, which appears well-calibrated, could be a signal to the world community, particularly the US, that India is still waiting for some visible signs from Pakistan that it is serious about stopping cross-border terrorism.

But the decision may also be a red herring, aimed at throwing the enemy off-guard before Delhi decides on a military strike to punish those responsible for Tuesday's attack in Jammu. Over 30 people died when militants opened fire on bus passengers and stormed an army camp.

The decision to ask Qazi to leave was taken after the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) met for one-and-a-half-hours this morning. Chaired by Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee, the meeting was attended by defence minister George Fernandes, home minister L.K. Advani, foreign minister Jaswant Singh and national security adviser Brajesh Mishra.

Before the CCS met, the three army chiefs had briefed Vajpayee in the "war room", in what was only the second such briefing since the Parliament attack. Sources said Vajpayee's address to the military commanders was full of nationalistic fervour. "He made the kind of speech a Prime

Minister would make before going to war," they said.

It was the foreign minister who announced after the CCS meeting that Qazi would have to go. Singh said it had been decided that the Pakistani high commissioner "be required to return to Islamabad" and justified the stand, saying it was "for the sake of parity in representation between the two countries".

Later, Jilani was summoned to South Block, where joint secretary (Iran-Pakistan-Afghanistan) in the foreign ministry Arun Singh, through a demarche, told him of India's decision. Delhi backed it with the charge

that Islamabad was still aiding and abetting terrorism and was responsible for escalating tension between the neighbours.

"This is a significant step and the Government of India has after a detailed examination of the situation, decided on this measure," foreign ministry spokesperson Nirupama Rao said. "We have seen no diminution whatsoever in Pakistan's support for terrorism. The figures of infiltration continue to be high. We have received reports of training camps for terrorists continuing to flourish in Pakistani territory and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir."

Rao said the attack on Kaluchak was "testimony to the fact that Pakistan continues to aid and abet the process of infiltration... and cross-border terrorism". The continuing "phenomenon", she added, "affects innocent people, innocent Indian men, women and children".

Qazi said he was "sorry" to leave India. "I have been here for five years and made many friends. Despite difficulties in the relationship, it has been a challenging and rewarding assignment. I regret that the step is taken. It is India's sovereign decision and we accept it."

But Delhi does not have many more diplomatic options left, having exhausted most of them after December 13. It has reduced the staff strength in its Islamabad mission by half and could slash it further. As an extreme measure, it could also close the mission down. Road, rail and air links between the two countries are already suspended.

Another tough step would be abrogating the Indus Water Treaty. The two sides are scheduled to meet later this month for talks on the pact.

Casualty claim

Ten Pakistani soldiers were killed and 15 enemy bunkers destroyed in retaliatory firing and shelling by Indian troops, an Indian defence spokesman said.



PM for front line

New Delhi, May 18: The Prime Minister will get away from the capital's blazing sun and toy-pistol-wielding sadhus demanding action against Pakistan (PTI picture above). But Atal Bihari Vajpayee will go to the front line and Kashmir before heading for the usual retreat in Manali.

The Prime Minister will address troops in the forward areas to boost their morale. Vajpayee is also expected to visit Jammu early next week and reach Kashmir on Wednesday.

The vacation in Manali, scheduled to begin from Monday, may now start from May 24.

Minister would make before going to war," they said.

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Pakistan holds fire

FROM IDREES BAKHTIAR

Islamabad, May 18: Pakistan has sought to play down the high commissioner's virtual expulsion, expressing "disappointment" but avoiding any comments that could reflect outrage.

The initial reaction in Islamabad was mild and stood out against the backdrop of the rhetoric such actions usually generate.

"The Government of Pakistan has noted with disappointment the decision of the Government of India to ask for the withdrawal of Pakistan's high commissioner in New Delhi," read a statement issued by the foreign ministry spokesman. Accordingly, he said, Pakistan has decided to recall the high commissioner.

The restraint was an indication that Islamabad was making a conscious effort not to escalate the situation. Observers felt that it could be because the Pakistan government was confident that the US would dissuade India from using the military option.

The muted response was in sharp contrast with an earlier statement by a minister who told a newspaper that Pakistan would take "equal or more steps" if India attacked.

"We have two options. Either to act in the same manner (issuing an equal threat) or to encourage India to engage in the peace dialogue. There's a readiness on our side and now it's up to India to decide to have peace or not. We will take equal or more steps against India in case of aggression," information minister Nisar Memon told *The News*.

THE TELEGRAPH

19 MAY 2002

COUNTERING PAKISTAN Government needs understanding

SOME Opposition members seemed a little unhappy that ministers did not spell out, during Friday's debate on Kashmir militancy, the details and timing of the government's response. They have only their immaturity and/or political cynicism to blame for such naivete. It should be obvious that operational details would be of inestimable help to the enemy. LK Advani saying that the House is not the forum where the government can reveal its strategy a priori, is fully justified. The sad thing is that he needed to say it. MPs should have known better. Except for this blemish, the debate rose a notch above recent standards. The issue — how to confront an intransigent Pakistan — no doubt sharpened the focus. The question itself poses, as this newspaper has noted, significant problems. Advani keeping an open deadline for the final decision is therefore both good strategy and good politics. The last thing the government needs is to be caught up in rhetoric and have its hand forced merely because MPs and media are clamouring for action. The Prime Minister and the home minister, in this context, will do well to tell the more excitable members of their own party to lower the decibel level. Criticise Pakistan by all means. But loose talk of strikes across LoC and teaching Pakistan a lesson creates pressures best avoided. Jayalalitha, we note, has advocated a war against Pakistan. Cynics may wonder whether her enthusiasm is not partly informed by the fact that Tamil Nadu is a distance away from possible theatres of war.

Those in the thick of action will be our soldiers. And, not for the first time, a determined and clear statement has come from their chief, General Padmanabhan, that the armed forces are ready if the executive wants a military response. Our forces, along with our higher judiciary, are institutions that have survived many bizarre turns over 50 years. That General Paddy means what he says is recognised outside this country, too. Which is why the last time he spoke up the Americans got all hot and bothered and government pandered to them by getting George Fernandes to issue a meaningless "clarification". This time, even the Americans are quiet. But the visit of Richard Armitage, the US deputy secretary of state following on the heels of the assistant secretary of state, Christina Rocca, suggests that the US are still stuck with Musharraf and haven't got an idea in their heads except how to placate him. We should proceed to a graded and incremental response as the only option. The decision — as reported in this newspaper — to start massive retaliatory firing in response to every LoC violation by Pakistani troops and militants, is an example of such a strategy. More elements will need to be filled out and this takes time and a lot of hard thinking. Government need the nation's patience. But this must not lead to complacency. A significant response is needed and should come as soon as may be. The country is united behind the Government. As Bush said in another context — Enough is Enough! Got that Mr President!

THE STATESMAN

19 MAY 2002

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1128

Defence team leaves for U.S.

By Sandeep Dikshit 19/5

NEW DELHI, MAY 18. A high-level Defence Ministry team left for the United States tonight to discuss with senior Pentagon officials the heightened tensions along the Indo-Pakistani border.

The focus of the week-long interaction in Washington will be on intensifying military-to-military ties, but officials expect the border situation to figure prominently due to the deteriorating security environment. The Americans are likely to counsel restraint on the part of India to maintain the spotlight on the ongoing operations against Al-Qaeda militants on Pakistan's western border.

The team, headed by the Defence Secretary, Yogendra Narain, has prepared a detailed presentation on India's perception of its neighbours, especially the threat to the country's security in its northern parts. It will also brief Pentagon on India's immediate security concerns, especially the stepped-up infiltration, the recent massacres by Pak-sponsored terrorists and the regular exchange of fire along the volatile Line of Control and the International Border in Jammu and Kashmir.

In view of the constant acts of provocation by Pakistan in sponsoring terrorism, the team is likely to point out the need for Islamabad to address India's concerns be-

fore it could reduce force levels on the border and considers a dialogue.

The visit is part of the sustained interaction between India and the U.S. after the two subcontinent neighbours adopted a defiant posture towards each other.

It follows the fire-fighting mission by the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Christina Rocca, to the subcontinent and the talk between the U.S. President, George Bush, and the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee.

The U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, has also kept in touch with his counterpart, Jaswant Singh, as has the U.S. National Security Adviser, Condoleeza Rice, with Brajesh Mishra.

Sonia for action, not shadow-boxing

FROM OUR SPECIAL
CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, May 17: Congress chief Sonia Gandhi today asked the government to come out with a definite plan to deal with the situation in Jammu and Kashmir as mere "customary rhetoric" was no substitute for strategy or vision.

"Saluting our defence forces" for their unflinching dedication and courage, she sought a convincing explanation on concrete results gained from the troops mobilisation as well as the government's long-term approach to the deployment.

The leader of Opposition, however, offered all cooperation to the Centre in its fight against Pakistan-sponsored terrorism.

Initiating a special discussion under Rule 193 in the Lok Sabha on the terrorist attack on the Jammu army camp, Sonia said: "We will continue to stand by the government on such vital issues."

Unlike previous occasions when Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee took umbrage at her speech, Sonia's carefully-crafted and well-delivered statement won praise from none other than home minister L.K. Advani, who asked the members to maintain the standard set by her address.

Advani chided his party colleague M.L. Khurana, who tried to criticise the Jawaharlal Nehru government for having taken the Kashmir issue to the United Nations when Indian troops were marching forward in 1947, after pushing back the Pakistani forces. "We should talk about today and the future and not the past," he said.

Speaker Manohar Joshi agreed with Congress deputy leader Shivraj Patil, who said members should be responsible while making their point as the objective of the debate would otherwise not be achieved.

Joshi said the issue was "highly sensitive" and members should refrain from making charges and counter-charges. He asked Khurana not to refer to history as the events were known to all.

In her speech, Sonia said the Kaluchak massacre would "tempt the government to resort to customary rhetoric", but emphasised that it was no "substi-

tute" for strategy. "If it (the government) has any strategy, it should spell it out clearly and once for all."

The Congress chief attacked the government for its failure to take effective steps to tackle terrorists despite the "unprecedented support from (the) Congress, other Opposition parties and the country". She said conflicting statements have been coming out from the Centre as well as its allies.

Though the country has been facing such a serious problem, India's diplomatic efforts, Sonia said, have been found to be wanting in sensitising international opinion. The Kaluchak incident, she argued, has exposed the "weaknesses" in the country's security apparatus.

Stating that Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir were round the corner, she said both the state government and the Centre must ensure that the polls are held on time. Steps should be taken to see that voters are allowed to exercise their franchise in a free and fair manner, she added.

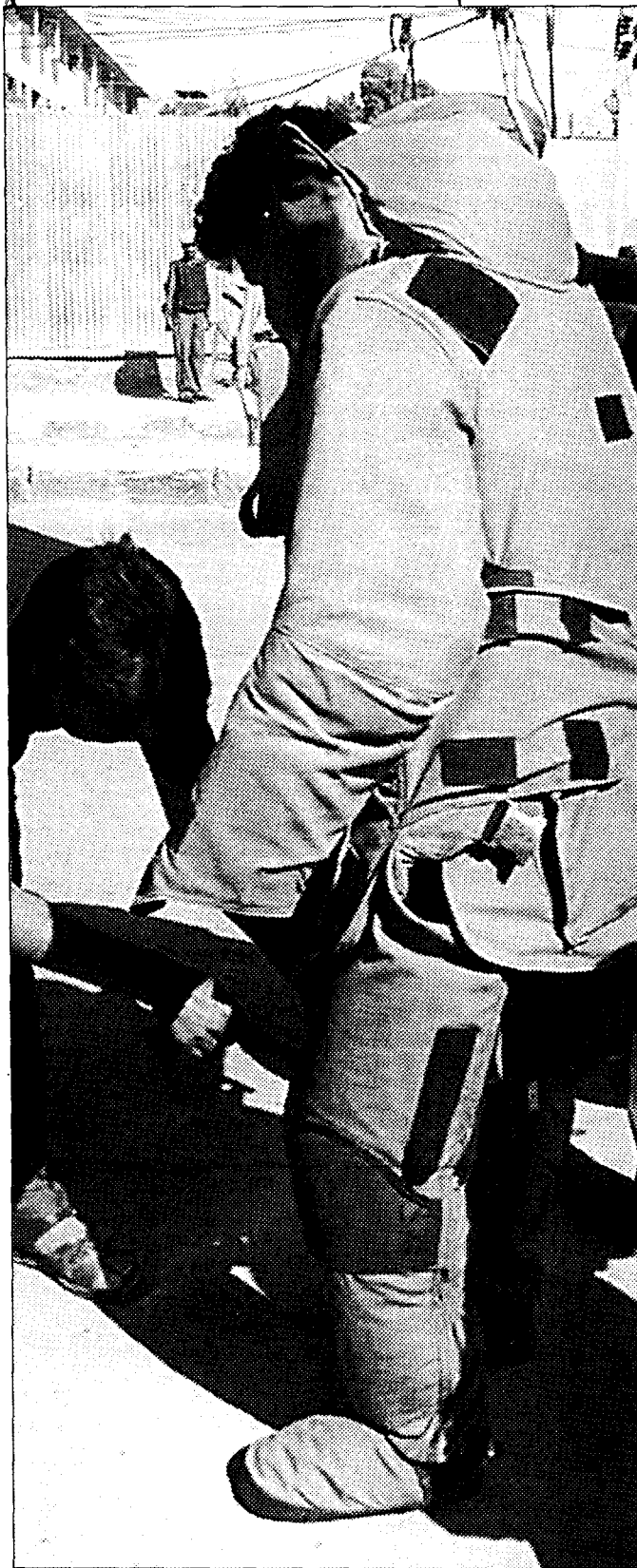
Sonia said a large section of the ruling Pakistani establishment, which does not want peace with India, is trying to sabotage prospects of reconciliation. But she expressed confidence that peace and normality would return to Jammu and Kashmir as a similar situation had been salvaged in Punjab some years ago.

The Congress chief wondered whether the US-led international coalition against terrorism has helped India in any way. "We must recognise that ultimately we have to tackle terrorism within our borders ourselves," she asserted.

"We see their double standards... Their design on Jammu and Kashmir," she said, pointing out that the perpetrators of cross-border terrorism were being regarded as allies in the war against global terrorism.

Sonia said Islamabad is not prepared to fulfil Delhi's demands, including the one on the 20 criminals and terrorists India wants handed over. Neither has it changed its policy and attitude towards cross-border terrorism, she added.

Sonia welcomed the new focus on terrorism but said the world awoke to the menace only after September 11.



A bomb disposal squad member dons protective gear at the blast site in Srinagar. (PTI)

Powell calls Jaswant

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, May 17: Foreign minister Jaswant Singh has called off a 10-day official trip to Africa scheduled for later this month, giving credence to the view that India is mulling action, perhaps a military strike, against terrorists operating from Pakistani soil.

But policy makers and strategists are working overtime to ensure that the "limited military strike" does not lead to a full-scale war with Pakistan or to the use of the neighbour's nuclear arsenal.

They are banking heavily on the US to prevail upon the Pervez Musharraf regime in Islamabad to keep its nuclear weapons out in case of an armed conflict.

The strategists are also hoping that the strong presence of the Americans in the region would help in limiting the conflict to the Line of Control.

US secretary of state Colin Powell called Singh early this morning urging him to ensure that India does not do anything in haste. Powell tried to argue that Delhi should give time to the Bush administration to work with Musharraf in taking care of Indian's concerns much more seriously and urgently.

However, Singh told Powell that India has been patient for the past six months and is finding it difficult to sit idle and do nothing though terrorists operating from Pakistan have continued to launch one attack after another in Jammu and Kashmir.

After Tuesday's attack on the passenger bus and the army camp in Jammu, India's patience is running thin and the government would have to take appropriate action against the perpetrators of the attack n

which innocent women and children were killed, Singh told Powell.

Later in the afternoon, US ambassador Robert Blackwill met Singh and national security adviser Brajesh Mishra to once again tell Delhi that it should do nothing in haste but allow the American leadership to work on Musharraf.

Blackwill, too, was told that India is left with very little option but to act decisively against the terrorists and their backers.

Officials here said the Bush administration has expressed confidence in the "wise leadership" of Prime Minister Atal

Bihari Vajpayee and has been trying to convince Delhi that it is working closely with Musharraf to dismantle the terrorist outfits and their infrastructure in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and elsewhere in the country.

The Bush administration has also been emphasising on the fact that like India, the US, too, was keen on a free and fair election in Kashmir.

But an armed India-Pakistan confrontation at this juncture would seriously jeopardise the prospects of bringing the maximum number of people in the strife-torn state to the political mainstream.

However, for the Indian leadership, it is becoming extremely difficult not to act. With the popular mood in Parliament stressing on punitive action against Pakistan, the Opposition has squarely lobbed the ball back to the Prime Minister's court.

Hesitancy on Vajpayee's part to act decisively would not only hand over a major political handle to the Opposition but could also jeopardise his position within the BJP.



Powell

Govt snaps at U.S. leash on reprisal

9-11 1895
Times News Network

New Delhi: Dismissing U.S. calls for restraint as another expression of Washington's double standards on terrorism, the Vajpayee government told parliament on Friday that it had kept all its options open and that the army was being consulted in order to work out a response to the Kaluchak attack.

Responding to the parliamentary debate on Monday's incident, home minister L.K. Advani said, "I can only say that the government understands the seriousness of the situation, we cannot announce it in the house, but we will take the right decision after consulting the army experts. We have to explore the options in consultation with the defence experts. Our reply should be decisive." He indicated that Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee would shortly address the nation on television and call an all-party meeting before making any announcement.

After the debate, both houses of parliament passed identical resolutions condemning the Kaluchak attack, calling on the international community to take note of the terrorism being encouraged by Pakistan and resolving "to fight against such senseless acts of terrorism..in a united and determined manner".

Sources said that on Saturday, the Cabinet Committee on Security would work out the government's broad strategy on how to deal

with the immediate situation. At the moment, the view emerging appeared to be to exhaust all diplomatic options before any military option was considered.

Mr Advani said that the government had information about 75 training camps for terrorists still in operation on the other side of the border and claimed that terrorist groups, like the Lashkar-e-Toiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad, were functioning in Pakistan despite a ban imposed by the Musharraf regime. He said that about 3,000 Al Qaida militants had recently shifted base from Afghanistan to Pakistan.

Earlier, leader of the opposition Sonia Gandhi said that her party would stand by the government on the vital issue of national security. She said that the government should act. "Rhetoric is no substitute for strategy and vision," she remarked.

Reacting to this, Mr Advani expressed his "deep disappointment" at Washington's "encouragement" to Pakistan by making it a key ally in the 'war on terrorism'. On his part, minister of state for external affairs Omar Abdullah also accused the U.S. and other Western powers of maintaining double standards regarding Pakistan's role in terrorist strikes in India.

Meanwhile, a high-level meeting was held at the Prime Minister's Office on Friday to review the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

'ATTACKERS WERE PAKISTANI NATIONALS'

H/O-1
1975

PM reviews security situation

of security

By Harish Khare

NEW DELHI, MAY 16. The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, today held consultations with his senior colleagues on the security and political fallout of the terrorist attack in Jammu, while the Union Home Minister, L.K. Advani, organised a review meeting of security officials.

The thrust of the meeting at the Prime Minister's residence was on formulating the Government's response tomorrow during the discussion in both the Houses of Parliament on the Jammu terrorist attack.

On the one hand, the Government has come under pressure from its allies on the right as well as the Sangh Parivar to match its rhetoric with action; on the other, the Opposition, though supportive of the Government, would want to know if the Vajpayee administration has a plan to implement the Prime Minister's assertion that there would be an "appropriate response" to the terrorist attack.

Those who attended the meeting included Mr. Advani, the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, the External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, and the National Security Adviser, Brajesh Mishra. Mr. Fernandes who had been to Jammu gave an account of the incident. It is believed that there was no discussion on a possible military response(s). (According to PTI, Jaswant Singh has cancelled his 12-day visit to Kenya, Tanzania and Mauritius starting May 27.)

The Defence Ministry, meanwhile, issued a statement saying that the three terrorists killed in the Kaluchak attack had been "identified as Pakistani nationals". They are: "Abu Suhail, son of Abdullah, resident of Faisalabad; Abu Mursheed (Mohammad Munir), son of Mehzabin Shah Jeb, resident of gali number 1, Salampatura, Rahwali Cant., Gujranwala district; and, Abu Javed (Amzad Salam bin Mohammed Gisha), son of Amir Bin Jabbi, resident of Guda Giriya village, Gujranwala district".

The statement asserted that "certain food items such as biscuits and chocolates found on the per-

sons of these terrorists also reveal that these items were bought from Zaffarwal, Pakistan. With this, the involvement of Pakistan in perpetrating cross-border terrorism has once again been established beyond doubt".

Another security-related confabulation took place at the Union Home Ministry which was attended by the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, Mr. Fernandes, the two Ministers of State in the Home Ministry, the Union Home Secretary, and other senior intelligence and defence officials. Mr. Advani presided.

After the review meeting, the official statement said: "Steps for further refining the strategy and tactics to be followed by security forces with special reference to checking infiltration, providing hinterland security and related confidence building measures for the civilian populations, continued operations against the terrorists and action against overground support base of the terrorists were discussed".

However, it is learnt that the Advani-presided meeting was primarily an Abdullah show. After the Home Minister's perfunctory welcome remarks, the stage was left for the J&K Chief Minister to make a pitch once again for "action" against Pakistan.

He held forth on Pakistan's ill-intentions, but made a point of thanking each and every paramilitary organisation for sacrifices of their jawans and officers.

Dr. Addullah demanded that his State get more para-military forces to compensate for the armed forces which have been deployed at the border. He was gently reminded that there were other internal security hotspots such as Gujarat which also needed the Army and para-military presence. The Chief Minister did get support from the intelligence agency on his demand for more forces.

Mr. Fernandes maintained a studied silence, as did the two Ministers of State for Home Affairs.

The meeting ended with Mr. Advani requesting Dr. Abdullah not to speak too much before the media.

THE HINDU

17 MAY 2002

An act of frustration: Fernandes

By Our Correspondent

JAMMU, MAY 15. Tuesday's suicide attack at Kaluchak in Jammu was an act of frustration of the Pakistani leadership and the situation called for punishing the sponsors of terrorism in the State, the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, said here today.

Speaking to the media at the Chief Minister's residence, Mr. Fernandes said the countries allied in the fight against terrorism must adopt a clear policy and no double standards would work if they really wanted to end the menace of terrorism. "The global allies to fight terrorism have to realise that terrorism is terrorism, whether it is in Afghanistan or in Jammu. India is an active member of the global alliance formed against terrorism and we provide logistical support to the alliance. Therefore, the alliance should help us by asking Pakistan to desist from sponsoring terrorism in India."

Mr. Fernandes said the attack in which women and children were killed would not go unpunished. But, he added, "what kind of punishment it will be is to be deliberated soon". About



The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, with the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, and the Army corps commander, V.G. Patankar, at the Raj Bhavan in Srinagar on Wednesday. — Photo: Nissar Ahmad

the demand from several quarters for opening a military front against Pakistan for abetting terrorism in the country, he said, "the Army does not act in emotions and we will do whatever is required keeping the situation in mind". But he ruled out a war in the immediate future. "The morale of the Army is

high and we will fight the menace of terrorism which we have been doing successfully for the last 12 years".

Asked about his interview to a foreign daily where he had been quoted as saying, "the way the situation is building in the State it seems that we are heading towards a war with Pakistan", Mr.

Fernandes replied in the affirmative. But he clarified that an appropriate stand would be taken in the course of time. Asked to give details of the punishment, he said, "Until the Assembly elections in the State are over we will not do anything".

Mr. Fernandes said the terrorists seemed to have devised a new plan to attack the families of Army personnel. Hence, security for Army residential areas situated along the international border and other sensitive places would be strengthened.

Earlier, the Defence Minister, along with the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, and the GoC 16 Corps, J.V.S. Yadava, visited the Kaluchak camp. He also visited the military hospital. He was briefed by security officers about the steps planned to prevent the recurrence of such an incident. He then left for Srinagar to take part in the oath ceremony of the new Chief Justice of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court.

Jammu city observed a bandh today called by all parties against the terrorist attack. The administration had ordered the closure of all educational institutions. Shops and establishments too remained closed.

THE HINDU

15 MAY 2002

JASWANT CANCELS VISIT TO AFRICA

Govt will respond to terror: PM

90%
100%
100%

**Nilova Roy Chaudhury
and Kavita Suri**

NEW DELHI/JAMMU, May 15. — As the Prime Minister told Parliament that his government would respond to the Jammu strike, clear indications that India's response could both assume serious proportions and would not be worked out in a hurry, came from Mr Jaswant Singh. The foreign minister has cancelled his Africa visit slated for later this month. Mr Singh was scheduled to visit Kenya, Tanzania and Mauritius between 27 May and 7 June.

Senior government officials said India's relations with Pakistan have become "seriously estranged" enough for the foreign minister to call off the long-planned tour. Diplomatic options are limited, officials said. But "other options" are being mulled and would "need to be carefully worked out", requiring the minister's presence within the country during that period.

Coming immediately after the departure of US assistant secretary of state Ms Christina Rocca's departure for Islamabad, Mr Singh's decision to call off the tour suggests that the government has clearly spelt out its responses for the American envoy to convey to the Pakistani leadership. Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee said that India would respond to Pakistan's terrorism being carried out in the country. Intervening during the Question Hour in the Lok Sabha, the Prime Minister said what happened in Jammu was a heinous crime. "*Hamain iska pratikar karna hoga*" (We would have to respond to this attack), he told the House. "It is our unanimous resolve to fight terrorism", he said, offering a meeting of all Opposition leaders to discuss the issue.

In Jammu, Mr George Fernandes, ruling out striking "in anger", spoke of considered action.

Addressing the media this morning at Dr Farooq Abdullah's residence, the defence minister said Pakistan-trained terrorists were involved in the killing of

Bush calls Vajpayee

NEW DELHI, May 15. — President Bush called the Prime Minister tonight and said he was appalled by yesterday's terrorist attack near Jammu. He said he understood India's outrage over the massacre.

Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee told Mr Bush that his government would take "appropriate action".

At a press conference in New Delhi today, Ms Christina Rocca said: "We are doing everything we can to promote dialogue (between the two sides). But the incident (at Jammu) didn't help curb the level of tension. Acts like this are intended to undermine peace and stability in the region."

Pervez reviews security: General Pervez Musharraf today reviewed the security along the Indo-Pak border with Army commanders. "Musharraf has held meetings during which he was briefed about the eastern borders," NNI news agency said today. — SNS/PTI

**USA can help defuse tension:
Rocca; page 6**

31 innocent people in Kaluchak. This, he said, was sheer frustration on Pakistan's part, as it could not get Kashmir even after 13 years of a proxy war.

Intelligence intercepts with the government spoke of militants in Zaffarwal congratulating each other that the mission had been carried out successfully,

killing women and children.

Asserting that Pakistan would be "punished" for this heinous act, Mr Fernandes said India could not allow this kind of terror to go unpunished. The nature of punishment would have to be deliberated upon later, but Pakistan needed to be taught a lesson.

However, when his attention was drawn to an interview published in a leading American daily yesterday, which quoted him as saying that strikes on Pakistan were ruled out in the immediate future, Mr Fernandes admitted having said so. Asked if he held on to the view after the Kaluchak *fidayeen* attack, the defence minister said he was firm that there was no immediate threat of war between the two countries.

Asked if in the present situation when Pakistan was unleashing so much bloodshed, there was no option but to go to war with the neighbouring country, Mr Fernandes said the decision would have to be taken in a cool state of mind and not in a fit of anger.

Mr Fernandes said India was part of the global coalition against terrorism and was giving every possible logistic support to America. "And if a member of that coalition was indifferent to terrorist activities, then it was high time for that coalition to decide as show to deal with the situation," he said.

Earlier, accompanied by Dr Abdullah, Mr Fernandes visited the military hospital where the survivors of the massacres are undergoing treatment.

Mr Fernandes arrived in Kashmir yesterday, cancelling his Goa visit, to take stock of the armed forces' preparedness in Leh and Kargil. He visited Drass, Kargil, Batalik and other remote areas and interacted with security forces.

Editorial: Trial and terror; page 4

THE STATESMAN

15 MAY 2002

H10-11

Jammu: meet on security issues today

16/5

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MAY 15. THE Union Home Minister, L. K. Advani, has called a high-level meeting tomorrow to discuss security issues following the terrorist attack in Jammu on Tuesday. The Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, and senior Home Ministry officials and Army officers are expected to attend the meeting here.

The Ministry seems to be waking up to the harsh reality that the global coalition against terrorism is not and will not prevent the kind of 'fidayeen' attack that took place yesterday, when terrorists boldly entered an Army camp. The urgent need is for some credible response to this attack.

The Government also seems to have hardened its stance on its demand that the 20 wanted men, including the underworld don, Dawood Ibrahim, be handed over to India by Pakistan as a minimum response to show that Pakistan meant business when it talked of going all out to seek and finish extremists operating from its soil.

The Bharatiya Janata Party's

9-11 & N Security
attack on the United States today was also an indicator that the Government had seriously begun questioning the benefits accruing to India from the so-called global coalition against terrorism. Certainly, it may have to reluctantly come to the conclusion that the United States may not be willing or even be able to fight India's war against cross-border terrorism.

SP MP, Cong. MLA sustain burn injuries

NEW DELHI, MAY 15. The Samajwadi Party MP, Reena Chaudhary and the Congress MLA from Himachal Pradesh, G.S. Bali, sustained burn injuries when a leaking LPG cylinder caught fire in the SP leader's official residence in North Avenue area today.

The Deputy Commissioner of Police, Mukesh Kumar Meena, said the two leaders were rushed to the Ram Manohar Lohia hospital, where they are undergoing treatment. The condition of Ms. Chaudhary is stable, while Mr. Bali is still being treated for serious burn injuries. — UNI

THE HINDU

16 MAY 2002

Parliament attack: 12 chargesheeted

Stateamen News Service

NEW DELHI, May 14. — Five months after the attack on Parliament, the Delhi Police special cell today filed a chargesheet in a local court against 12 people, including three Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed militants — Masood Azhar, Gazi Baba and Tariq Ahmed.

Nine other people chargesheeted in the 13 December attack case include Mohammed Afzal, Shaukat Hussain Guru, his wife Navjot Sandhu and Sayed Abdul Rehman Geelani — currently lodged in the Tihar Jail — and five terrorists — Mohammed, Hamza, Haider, Raza and Rana — who were killed in the counter-attack by the police.

The police in the 33-page chargesheet stated that Gazi Baba, Masood Azhar and Tariq Ahmed — declared as proclaimed offenders — had planned the attack at the instance of the ISI. The attack was coordinated by the LeT and JeM. The slain terrorists along with Mohammed Afzal, Shaukat Hussain and Sayed Abdul Rehman Geelani (Geelani taught Arabic at Zakir Husain College) planned the attack at the residence of Shaukat Hussain and his wife Navjot Sandhu at Mukherjee Nagar.

The assistant commissioner of police (New Delhi), special cell, Mr Rajbir Singh, filed the chargesheet before the special judge at the Patiala House courts, Mr SN Dhingra, through the prosecution counsel, Mr DP Aggarwal. The police submitted a 811-page document, including a 33-page chargesheet, to the court. The police also submitted a list of 185 witnesses in connection with the case. All the suspects have been booked for criminal conspiracy, murder, attempt to murder and sedition under relevant sections of the IPC, Explosive Substances and the Pota.

Police said it all started after Mohammed Afzal, then a member of the JKLF, crossed over to PoK.

He came to Delhi in 1990 and started residing with his cousin Shaukat Hussain at Mukherjee Nagar. In 2001, Tariq Ahmed contacted him and told him about the plan of the attack. Ahmed subsequently introduced him to Gazi Baba.

Terrorist strike leaves 30 dead in Jammu

Gunmen attack army camp after killing 7 bus passengers

Times News Network

JAMMU: In one of the worst terrorist strikes in this region, heavily armed militants on Tuesday killed at least 30 people, including 23 army personnel and their families. The terrorists first opened fire on a bus coming from Himachal Pradesh and then stormed the Kaluchak army camp. The three terrorists were later killed in a gun battle with the security forces.

According to the police, some 40 people were injured and were taken to different hospitals. Seven passengers died in the attack on the bus on the Jammu-Pathankot highway. In the subsequent attack on the army campus, the terrorists lobbed hand grenades and used automatic weapons, killing 23 people.

Some army vehicles parked in the camp were also blown up by the terrorists.

A state of alert has been sounded in the Jammu region. Traffic on the Pathankot-Jammu highway was suspended for several hours.

The incident occurred at about 6 a.m. when most of the inmates of the army quarters were asleep. The dead included women and children. A little known militant outfit, the Al-Masoorah, suspected to be a shadow group of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Toiba, and the Jamiat-ul-Mujahideen, claimed responsibility for the attack.

A person claiming to be the

spokesperson for the Al-Masoorah reportedly told a local news agency in Srinagar that the group would carry out more strikes, mostly in the Jammu region.

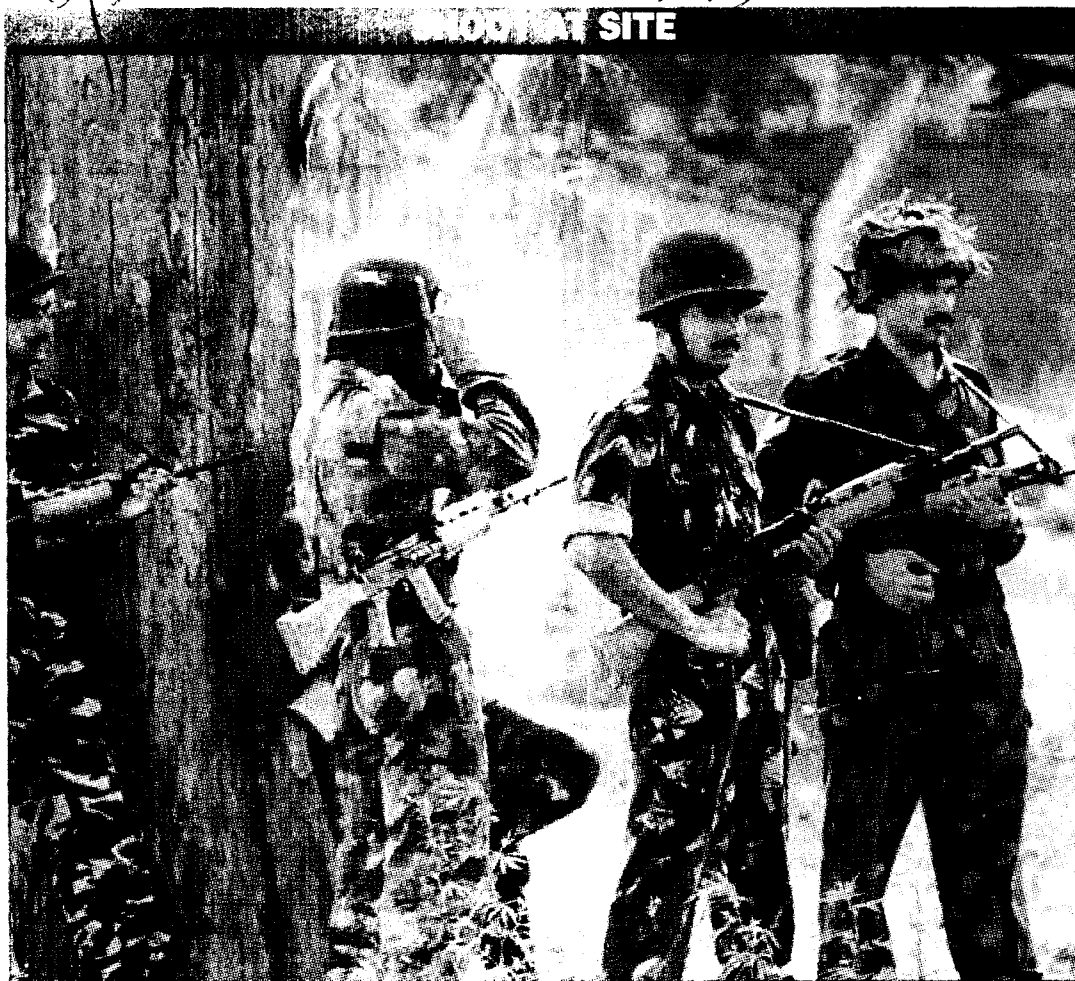
It is learnt that three terrorists dressed in army fatigues boarded the bus, which was coming from Manali, at Vijaypur, 30 km from here on the Pathankot-Jammu national highway.

Some of the passengers grew suspicious about their accents and asked the driver and the conductor to stop the bus and carry out a search. When the bus stopped at Kaluchak, the terrorists used their automatic rifles to begin firing indiscriminately. They also lobbed a hand grenade at the bus.

The driver died on the spot, while the conductor survived. Several local shopkeepers and residents, braving the grenade attacks and a hail of bullets, ran to the rescue of the injured and rushed them to hospital. In the confusion, the three terrorists escaped and ran into the army camp.

They fired at the guard on duty at the gate and lobbed more grenades. The terrorists then reportedly holed up in a room from where they continued to fire and throw hand grenades. The camp was soon surrounded by security forces and after a prolonged exchange of fire, the terrorists were gunned down.

► Related reports on Page 7



Army personnel take positions around the residential quarters of the army camp in Kaluchak near Jammu which was the site of the shoot-out between militants and soldiers on Tuesday morning.



"The world should wake up now. It is time to finish terrorism altogether. It has to be made clear to Pakistan that it should be ready to face the consequences."

—J&K chief minister
Farooq Abdullah

"It is likely that the terrorists wanted to do something desperate since for the last four weeks they had suffered a large number of casualties, in the proportion of 12 killed for every one member of the security forces. For the first time, all parties are united to meet the challenge."

—J&K governor Girish Saxena

"Terrorism of this kind does nothing to advance the cause in whose name it is conducted. I hope that all countries in the region condemn this act unreservedly."

—British foreign secretary
Jack Straw

"The government of Pakistan strongly condemns the death of a number of civilians in an armed attack near Jammu. Such incidents warrant an impartial and comprehensive inquiry to unmask the motives of their perpetrators."

—Pak foreign office
spokesperson in Islamabad

"The terrorist attack was carried out to sabotage the coming elections to the state assembly. The only way out is to impose President's rule in the state and hand over the state to the armed forces."

—Senior Delhi Shiv Sena leader
Abhimanyu Gulati

Attack is bid to derail J&K polls

By Manoj Joshi
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: When defence minister George Fernandes told *The New York Times* on Monday that India would not attack Pakistan even if severely provoked, he could not have known that the provocation would come just 24 hours later. The ghastly attack on the army cantonment at Kaluchak, near Jammu, took the lives of scores of army personnel and their wives and children.

Mr Fernandes is cited as saying that India will not take military action against Pakistan at least until the state assembly elections are held in Kashmir in September. The attack, apparently by terrorists who may have crossed over from Pakistan the previous night, is directed towards breaking the momentum of events that will restore peace in the state. Its aim is to compel an angry Indian reaction and thereby deflect the growing

Indo-American pressure on Gen Pervez Musharraf to live up to his January 12 promises.

The sentiment for 'free and fair' elections has been gathering strength in recent months. The Hurriyat may still shy away from declaring its hand, but statements, including at the recent Dubai meeting, show that there is a strong sentiment for peace in the Valley. There is a marked rift between the hardliners, led by Syed Ali Shah Geelani, and moderates like Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Abdul Ghani Lone, both of whom met in Dubai with PoK leader Sardar Abdul Qayoom, an early supporter of the armed militancy.

The split in the Hizbul Mujahideen, the most formidable domestic militant group, has been yet another signal that militancy is turning away from the jihadi extremists being aided by Pakistan.

It is this last event that has triggered this latest outrage. In this

sense, the Rocca visit is more an occasion for the massacre rather than its cause.

Islamic terrorist groups which have had their Afghan bases destroyed and been forced to adopt a low profile in Pakistan have been getting a battering from Indian security forces in the last couple of months and are increasingly desperate.

The U.S. official has been told, in the words of minister of state for external affairs Omar Abdullah, that "events like this make it difficult for India to maintain restraint". In the last three months, U.S. officials have been saying that infiltration has come down and Gen Musharraf has pressured the jihadi groups to curb cross-border activity.

While the Indians can manage events in the state and limit infiltration, the U.S. must play its part to dismantle the jihadi support structure within the Pakistani armed forces.

I have sought fresh reports on coffin issue: Fernandes

By Our Special Correspondent

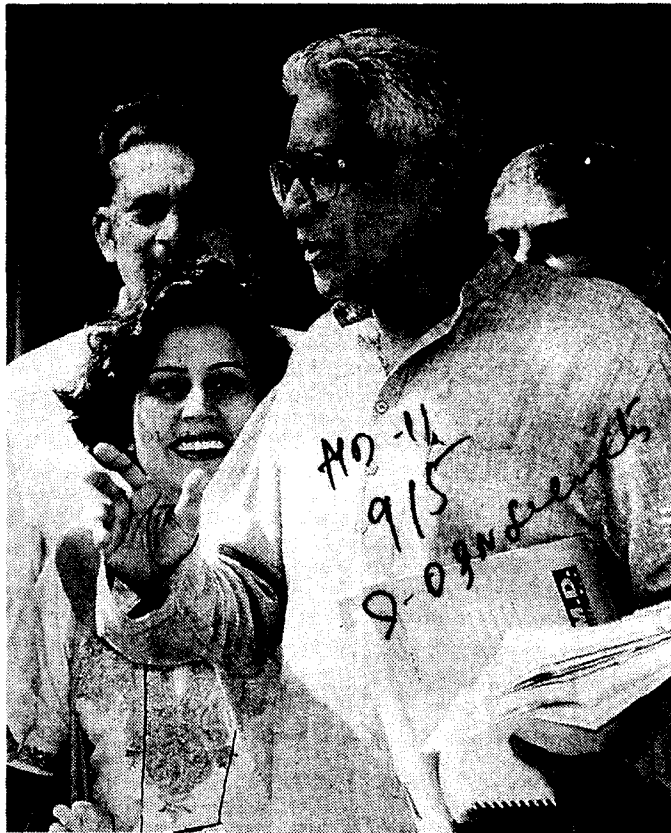
NEW DELHI, MAY 8. The Defence Minister, George Fernandes today found the going tough in the Rajya Sabha as the coffin issue resurfaced following a news report that the caskets were procured at twice the price. Amid vociferous protests, brief adjournment and Opposition walkout, Mr. Fernandes announced that he had already sought fresh reports into the allegations.

For about 25 minutes into zero hour, proceedings in the House were affected after Suresh Pachouri (Congress) referred to a report in an English daily which alleged that 500 aluminum caskets purchased during the Kargil war were imported from the United States for \$ 2,500 each as against its availability for less than half. He also said that a Delhi court had ordered the CBI to reply to a petition relating to a complaint on Tehelka tapes expose. It did not take long for the other Opposition members to lend support which grew louder when Mr. Fernandes rose to clarify the position.

His initial attempt to make a statement was virtually lost in the din, with an unrelenting Opposition insisting that since the CBI came under the Prime Minister, only he could reply.

Even after the Chairman, Krishan Kant, ruled that Mr. Fernandes who was named by the member and present in the House, had the right to reply, the Opposition maintained its stance. With stalemate persisting, Mr. Kant adjourned the House for 15 minutes and held a meeting of leaders in his Chambers.

On reassembly, when Mr. Kant asked Mr. Fernandes to reply, the Opposition members



The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, talking to presspersons after appearing before the Justice Venkataswamy commission of enquiry in New Delhi on Wednesday. — Photo: Rajeev Bhatt

were on their feet again protesting and eventually walked out with Kapil Sibal (Cong.) saying that they did not recognise Mr. Fernandes as the Defence Minister.

With only the AIADMK MPs in the Opposition benches, Mr. Fernandes said after perusing the news report, he had asked the Army Headquarters, the Ministry of Defence and Indian mission in Washington to ascertain the facts and send a report. Once it became available, he would place it before the Public

Accounts Committee which is going into it and if the House desired, would make the same available.

He clarified that only 150 caskets were purchased, that too much after the Kargil war and they were never intended for martyrs of the Kargil war. Also, since most of what the Opposition said could not be heard by him in the din, he be allowed to reply to the allegations against his Ministry and the Government after going through the records.

Tapes demoralised troops: George

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, May 8. — The defence minister, Mr George Fernandes, had contempt for his former party treasurer, Mr RK Jain, and the Tehelka undercover reporters, but for the Tehelka counsel, Mr Siddharth Luthra, he had a warm embrace.

Appearing today before the Venkataswamy Commission, probing the Tehelka case, Mr Fernandes dismissed the talk between Mr Jain and the Tehelka reporters, pretending to be arms-dealers, saying it was a case of a "con-man meeting con-men." But minutes after being grilled for an hour, he embraced Mr Luthra.

"His father (lawyer KK Luthra) stood by me during the Emergency when few people dared to. And he stood by me even after the Emergency," he said.

The courtroom was packed today in sharp contrast to the usual thin turn-out and the main

event was the hour-long interrogation. Among those present were defence ministry officials and a majority of Armed Forces officials who took money on tape.

Mr Fernandes said if Tehelka had sensitive information on corruption in the defence ministry, they could have gone to the President of India also commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces. This, if Tehelka did not trust either him or the Prime Minister, he added.

He — speaking before the Commission — appointed after the Tehelka expose, said the findings demoralised troops and helped Pakistan. He wanted to know if there was a malafide reason behind the investigations.

With the case against Mr Fernandes being very thin — all one could say was that he had let his house be a meeting place between the arms-dealers and his party president Ms Jaya Jaitley — Tehelka counsel Mr Luthra concentrated on trying to prove that the tapes were not 'doctored'

and strengthening the case against others.

When the counsel asked him whether he could say positively that Ms Jaitley didn't take money from the Tehelka undercover reporters, he replied: "The question is best addressed to her." Did she tell him that arms traders had come to see her? He said that there was 'no need'.

Repeatedly, the counsel kept quoting from the transcript, usually on the statements made by Mr Jain, saying that Mr Fernandes didn't take money, forcing the minister to say it was true because he knew himself. He continued to say the "whole thing was a sham" and parts of the transcript were 'scurrilous'.

The exchanges were even, with the counsel having the minister on the back foot for a bit, but then, Mr Fernandes quickly hit back, drawing cheers from his supporters.

The defence minister said that he could not remember who recommended that Mr Jain be made Samata Party treasurer or

who introduced Mr Jain to him. A treasurer, he said, was not an important post at all. He was also president of the Delhi state unit of his party, but the minister said he resigned after the Tehelka expose. Was Mr Jain a member of the party? He said that he was not sure.

Mr Fernandes was on firmer ground when the counsel asked him if Mr Jain had brought up issues involving arms purchases. "He dared not," the defence minister replied.

He stoutly defended Ms Jaitley, calling her one of the finest political activists and praising her understanding of handicrafts and work on human rights, even during the 1984 riots. The minister said that he knew her for more than 25 years.

Ms Jaitley was reportedly in the room in the minister's house when the money was handed over by the Tehelka reporters to Mr Gopal Pacharwal, a man Mr Fernandes said has been a colleague of 30 years.

The minister also dismissed



Mr George Fernandes after appearing before the Venkataswamy Commission in New Delhi on Wednesday. — AFP

the point that Ms Jaitley had told the undercover reporters that they would get a fair deal. He said that she did not want justice to be done and had told the Tehelka reporters that.

THE STATESMAN

9 MAY 2002

George's Kargil coffins cost half of what was paid

9/17
9/18

9/17
D&N

By Rajesh Ramachandran
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Contrary to defence minister George Fernandes' claim that \$2,500 was the right price for the coffins imported by his ministry during the Kargil war, the coffins actually cost less than half that amount.



George Fernandes

The Defense Supplies Center Philadelphia (DSCP), a U.S. defense procurement agency, buys aluminium caskets with the identical specifications for around \$1,200. In the U.S. system, the product is called a 'human remains transfer case' and bears the national stock number (NSN) 9930-00-823-9805.

TNN asked the DSCP whether \$1,200 rather than \$2,500 was an appropriate and reasonable price for a 'human remains transfer case' if the Indian Army were directly to approach its suppliers. Tom Sidor of the directorate of medical material, DSCP, replied, "The answer is yes. The price that these manufacturers charge is of course related to the quantity being bought. We have bought quantities between 34 and 78 and paid prices ranging from \$1,159 to \$1328."

In contrast, the defence ministry agreed to pay \$2,500 per casket (with another \$500 per casket for transport) even though it ordered 500 caskets.

Even as recently as last year, Pentagon procurers bought the same caskets for half that price. "The last award we made for this item was on October

19, 2001, for 70 caskets. The unit price for that order was \$1,250," Gregg Tatarka, the contract specialist at the directorate of medical material, DSCP, told TNN.

During the Kargil war, the ministry approved the urgent purchase of aluminium caskets to transport the dead bodies of martyrs. On July 28, 1999, the defence ministry's price negotiating committee comprising L.M. Mehta and Maj Gen S.P. Murgai of Tehelka fame awarded the contract to Texas-based Buitron & Baiza on the basis of a written quotation of April 29, 1997. (Viz. Item no.12342... NSN 9930-00-823-9805, unit price, \$2,500 each).

The first consignment of 150 caskets reached India on March 6, 2000, but was rejected as over-weight. Subsequently, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) indicted the defence ministry for paying an inflated price and not attempting to seek quotations from other suppliers. Mr Fernandes has publicly attacked the CAG for this ruling.

Despite the existence of at least three U.S. suppliers, a pamphlet setting out the defence ministry's case and endorsed by Mr Fernandes insisted the ministry had no option but to go to Buitron & Baiza. It states: "There is only one manufacturer now of such aluminium caskets in the world, located in the U.S. It is obvious that avenues abroad were explored but there were just no other sources."

Curiously, Buitron Funeral Homes or Buitron & Baiza is not a "source" for caskets as far as the U.S. military is concerned. "We have two trusted sources of supply for this item," Mr Tatarka told TNN.

9-032 secrets
MONDAY, MAY 6, 2002

ANOTHER HAWK DOWN HD-10 8/5

IT WILL BE a while before the precise cause of the IAF plane crash at Jalandhar is known. But the tragic accident, which killed at least seven people after the aircraft ploughed into a commercial building block, has inevitably focussed attention on what has been long regarded as the backbone of the air force — the MiG-21. If the IAF's overall record with respect to plane crashes is dismal, the statistics when it comes to MiG-21 aircraft is appalling. Most of the 185 MiG aircraft that have had mishaps over the last decade are variants of the MiG-21 which, as a result, has earned the unfortunate sobriquet 'flying coffin'. Such jibes may not be fair about an aircraft which was first inducted into the IAF four decades ago, which has played a pivotal role during wartime and which incredibly continues to remain a mainstay of the air force. But there are reasons to be seriously worried about India's ageing fleet of MiG-21s. They account for more than half the crashes that take place; according to one estimate, the IAF loses one MiG for every 2,500 flight hours, making it one of the most vulnerable aircraft in service with any air force in the world.

The frequency of MiG-21 crashes has gone up dramatically over the last few years. The Jalandhar accident is the fifth this year and it was only late last month that another of these single-seat multi-role fighters went down near a village along the Rajasthan-Haryana border. From the year 2000 onwards, about 25 MiG-21s have crashed in various parts of the country. Given that most of these aircraft are two-decades old, age is a problem — but it is by no means either the only or the most important one. The La Fontaine Committee, headed by the then Chief of the Air Staff, has stated that the frequent crashes are a result of three main causes: bird hits, pilot error and maintenance failures. Fre-

quent pilot errors carry an inescapable conclusion — they point to the failure of the establishment to train pilots adequately. For years now, experts have pointed out that Indian fighter pilots, who receive their basic training on sub-sonic aircraft such as Kiran, have to make a qualitative jump when made to fly aircraft which travel at Mach 2 speeds such as MiG-21s. It is against this background that the delay in inducting advanced jet trainers (AJTs) — which were recommended for purchase almost two decades ago — must be viewed. The process of acquiring AJTs is now at an advanced stage and although they will not provide a one-stop solution for crashes, their acquisition will go a considerable way in redressing fundamental lacunae in the pilot training procedures.

As far as crashes go, there are other problems that need to be urgently addressed. Shabby maintenance is an important contributory cause, a related factor being the poor quality of spares. At another level, the manner in which the technical upgradation of the fighters has taken place has left much to be desired. Inexcusable delays in the refit, a massive project to upgrade the avionics and technical capabilities of MiG-21s, have compounded the problem. As an immediate response, the IAF has grounded the entire fleet of the MiG-21 variant which went down in Jalandhar, but what is really needed are lasting or durable solutions to a problem that has many dimensions. Crashes consume large sums of money, but they are not merely about the loss of expensive aircraft or about crores of rupees expended on training pilots going to waste. They are about inefficient and insensitive procedures which cause a serious loss of morale within the air force. Most of all, they are about a tragic and unpardonable loss of human lives.

THE HINDU

6 MAY 2002

George blames Cong to fend off criticism

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, May 3

DEFENCE MINISTER George Fernandes today blamed the Congress for what has been happening in Gujarat for the past two months, in a clarification of his speech in the Lok Sabha on April 30.

His speech had drawn angry protests from the Opposition and women activists. Fernandes had said during the discussion on Gujarat under Rule 184 that there was nothing new about women being raped and assaulted during riots and that it had happened under previous regimes.

"Remarks were made in the context of pointing out the hypocrisy of the Congress which

was the presiding government when numerous instances of such abominable violence occurred in the country," his release today said.

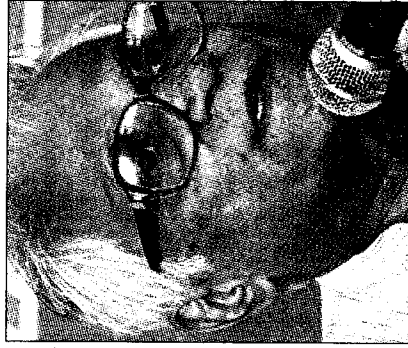
He said it was not his intention to justify the recent violence in Gujarat, in which the target often were women and children. Fernandes said that he only tried to "show the futility of repeatedly narrating such incidents in the House, while the need of the hour was to focus on restoration of peace in Gujarat".

Fernandes congratulated himself for his efforts to "bring back peace and security for the people of Gujarat" and said he was sure that the "seeds of the violence, mayhem and pain that I have personally seen during the num-

ber of visits to Gujarat were sown and watered by various Congress governments in the past". This, according to him, was the "main focus" of his statement in the House.

There was not a word of apology for having made a personal remark against Congress president Sonia Gandhi who, he had observed, was chewing gum in the House.

Fernandes said through his political life he had "stood up for the downtrodden and weaker sections and the proud women of India". "Nowhere in my speech was there even the remotest attempt to disrespect the women of our country for whose dignity and welfare I have fought all through my life," he said.



GEORGE FERNANDES

Women's protest: About 50 women activists found their way into South Bloc today, taking se-

curity personnel by surprise when they started a demonstration against George Fernandes's comment in Parliament yesterday that there was nothing new about attacks on women during riots.

Additional reinforcements, women constables, barricades and control room vans were brought in, but only when the demonstration was almost over. Photographers, including HC Tiwari of *Hindustan Times*, were roughed up by security personnel.

"The women sneaked in, in batches of twos and threes, saying that they wanted to go to the main reception area," one of the guards said. "It seems that their placards were hidden in their bags. We were taken by surprise."

After the initial surprise, se-

curity staff closed the gates at South Bloc and tried to hustle journalists outside, provoking a volley of protests from the demonstrators.

"We wanted to meet Defence Minister George Fernandes," said Brinda Karat, general secretary of AIDWA. With her were members of other organisations such as Jagori, Sama and Ni rankat. "But it seems that he was busy in a meeting. At this point we decided to lodge our protest in the form of a demonstration within the South Bloc premises," Karat said.

"We are outraged by the grotesque ridiculing of the terrible crime committed against women of the minority community in Gujarat," Karat said.

7 killed as MiG rams into bank

IAF decides to discontinue use of such planes for training

HT Correspondent
Jalandhar, May 3

SEVEN PERSONS were killed and 17 injured after an Indian Air Force MiG-21 caught fire in midair and crashed into a Bank of Rajasthan building here around 10 am. Six of the victims were bank employees.

The IAF promptly suspended flight training on this particular batch of MiG-21, variant 75. A court of inquiry has also been ordered into the cause of the crash.

The injured, mostly passers-by or attendants of nearby shops, have been admitted to the local civil hospital. Pilot SK Naik bailed out in the nick of time and parachuted to safety.

The MiG took off from Adampur Air Force station at 9.37 am as part of a training programme. Eyewitnesses said they heard a blast in the air around 9.55 am and saw flames blazing out of the plane along with a thick trail of smoke near Pathankot Chowk, nearly 3 km from the site of the mishap. Seconds later, it came crashing down into the building, setting it ablaze. The plane's tail, about 15 feet long, got stuck in a residential building. The structure was severely damaged, but all its occupants escaped unhurt.

Fire tenders reached the crash site only after 20 minutes though the fire station was only 200 metres away. The firemen soon ran out of water supply, compelling the civil administration to call upon the Army to help in the rescue operation. Even after six hours of the incident, the Army, the Air Force as well as local fire fighters and police couldn't bring the fire under control.

Today's crash is the third MiG-21 accident in one week. According to official figures, 84 jets in the MiG series have crashed in the past five years. This had prompted two key par-



OUT OF THE BLUE: Rescue operations under way in the locality where the plane went down.

HT PHOTO

WHY ARE THE IAF'S MiGs CRASHING?

Is the MiG-21 flawed? Less than 50 per cent of MiG crashes were caused by technical defects. Operational lapses, poor maintenance and lack of quality control are major causes.

Is the aircraft obsolete? The plane is 1960s technology but it isn't obsolete. There are over 8,000 MiG-21 variants flying in various air forces. The Pakistan Air Force took delivery of several squadrons of a China-made MiG-21 derivative this year. With upgrades, they can keep flying for years.

So why are MiGs crashing so often? While the accident rate for MiG variants is higher, they comprise an overwhelming majority of the IAF fleet. The MiG-21 accounts for 60% of the IAF's strength.

Is IAF training to blame? Yes. A govt report blasts the IAF's trainer aircraft. For instance, it says, the HPT-32 trainer is "defective" and has "deficient avionics". With basic training on such poorly equipped aircraft, pilots can hardly be expected to fly the highly demanding MiG-21 confidently.

liamentary committees — Public Accounts Committee and the Standing Committee — to demand phasing out of the aircraft.

According to official figures, 10 MiG-21s crashed in 1998-99, 13 in 1999-2000, 12 in 2000-2001 and 3 so far in the last two months, causing a financial loss of Rs 677 crore. Human error, bird hit and technical faults

have been identified as the main cause of these accidents.

Despite today's crash, the IAF is committed to flying the MiG-21 in the long term. As many as 125 MiG-21s are being upgraded with Russian help. It has taken 106 MiG-21 crashes in the last 10 years for the IAF to finally ground nearly six squadrons of the jet fighter.

Air Force authorities says a

major fault in the engine, which is manufactured in India, may be the primary reason for the recent spate of crashes. "The R-25 is used in this aircraft. We have had two flame-outs in aircraft using this engine. It is our responsibility to examine why this has occurred," said Air Chief Marshal S Krishnaswamy.

In the last 10 years, more

than 40 pilots have been killed flying the MiG-21. The parents of young pilots who have been killed in crashes say today's decision to ground a MiG-21 variant is a small step forward. But despite the decision to ground the aircraft from flight training exercises, the aircraft remains deployed on the Indo-Pak border and will continue to be used in operational roles.

Hi-tech devices to trace missing Mig

GAURAV C. SAWANT
NEW DELHI | MAY 4

HE hunt for the two missing pilots of the Mig trainer which went missing from Tezpur airbase 10 days ago may be the biggest ever manhunt launched by the Indian Air Force (IAF).

The IAF has already flown in high-technology equipment like infra-red sensors and magnetic devices to Tezpur, apart from using satellite imagery to trace the pilots

and the aircraft.

The state-of-the-art infra-red sensors and magnetic devices are being used to penetrate through the thick jungle and locate either the pilots or the wreckage. So far, the IAF has flown over 120 sorties with the equipment aboard the helicopters, but without luck so far.

The jet was on a routine training mission where Squadron Leader Khan was instructing Flying Officer Dahiya. The aircraft is feared to have crashed somewhere along the Indo-Bhutan border.

"There were two aircraft and they were flying in formation. The other aircraft returned to base earlier since it was low on fuel. While carrying out some manoeuvres Khan and Dahiya suddenly went off the radar screen," sources at the Air Force headquarters said.

Both the IAF and Army have launched joint operations with the Royal Bhutanese Army to try and locate the wreckage. But more than 10 days later, the IAF is now relying more on infra-red sensors to trace either the aircraft or pilots and magnetic devices to pick out the wreckage and even satellite imagery of the area. "These magnetic devices are slung 30 metres under the helicopters and we hope to trace a part of the wreckage or any magnetic material. We have also taken 1 metre by 1 metre resolution satellite pictures but so far no luck," sources added.

The Mig-21 trainer aircraft was flying some 100 kilometres west of Tezpur close to the Bhutan border when it went missing. Preliminary IAF investigations say there was nothing wrong with the aircraft.

MIG crash: Ex-gratia for victims' kin

■ JALANDHAR: The Bank of Rajasthan on Saturday announced an ex-gratia of Rs 1.50 lakh to the kin of each of its three permanent employees, who were killed when an IAF Mig-21 jet crashed into its Basti Adla branch in Punjab on Friday.

— P71

INDIAN EXPRESS

5 MAY 2002

Supersonic *Brahmos* testfired

5/1 J.D.N. Lelandy
Statesman News Service

28/4
NEW DELHI, April 28. — With the successful test-flight of the supersonic missile *Brahmos* at the Interim Test Range at Balasore today, the Indian Navy is all set to launch it from a surface ship in a few months.

The missile could be tested from a *Kachin*-class destroyer, possibly *INS Ranjit*, in September, but a final decision is yet to be taken. The *Dhanush*, naval version of the *Prithvi* surface-to-surface missile, will also be tested soon.

A product of Indo-Russian defence collaboration, the *Brahmos* (the name deriving from a combination of the words Brahmaputra and Moscow) has a range of 290 km for the moment, which could be raised further. The prototype missile was launched at 11 a.m. from Complex No. 3 of the ITR.

The eight-metre-long *Brahmos* was launched vertically from a container which can be carried on ship or submarine, and with some modifications, on an aircraft. Launched from a ship, it can fly up to a height of 14 km at a speed of 2 Mach.

The missile in standard format carries a 200 kg conventional warhead, and is charged by solid propellant. It has a pre-set trajectory, but a sensor on the head detects the target and can change the missile's course to strike up to 20 km from the targeted range. It can also skim at near-surface level.

The company which developed *Brahmos* was set up following an Indo-Russian agreement of February 1998 to design, produce and market a supersonic missile. The DRDO and Moscow's Scientific Research Institute of Machine Building have developed the missile.

29 APR 2002

THE STATESMAN

Fast-track defence deals under 'eminent group' scanner

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, April 23: Stung by successive allegations of irregularities in purchases, the defence ministry today announced that it was setting up an "Eminent Persons Group" to scan all acquisitions under a new procurement regime.

Defence secretary Yogendra

Narain made it clear that major acquisitions were on the anvil in the short term "in keeping with the role that India will be playing in the region".

To streamline procurement, a revised acquisition and procurement policy was being adopted to enable the government to make all purchases by striking a balance between the secrecy that military transac-

tions demanded and transparency "that is the public demand".

This is a follow-up to the new procedure begun last year when the government set up the Defence Procurement Board. Narain said all proposals will be vetted by the board and a Defence Acquisitions Council. After these were cleared and just before the signing of contract, the clearance of the Eminent

Persons Group will be sought. The group will comprise economists, former officers of the Comptroller and Auditor General's office and military experts.

Narain said this would be part of the "fast track" method for procurements that the defence ministry has proposed to the Union Cabinet. Also included in the procedure would be a "standard contract document"

for all purchases being made from Russia. Russian armament companies supply about 70 per cent of India's military hardware.

In a small way, the fast-track procurement procedure has already been put in place. Narain said that since the defence ministry took the decision, 131 cases for the army, 15 for the navy and 24 for the IAF were cleared in the

last half of 2001-2002. This was about the twice the number of clearances in the previous six months. Despite tardy acquisitions at the start of the year, the ministry was able to make purchases of about Rs 16,000 crore.

This year, too, the ministry is expecting to exhaust the capital budget of Rs 21,000 crore allocated to it in the Union budget.

At the inaugural of a semi-

nar on reforms in the Indian and Russian defence industries hosted by the journal, *India Defence Review*, Narain said India was also open to non-traditional ways of procurement.

The \$146-million deal with the US to procure eight weapon locating Radars — concluded last week — was illustrative of this. Defence ministry sources said it could take as little as 60

days to take deliveries of the radars, bought under the US government's Foreign Military Sales (FMS) procedure.

Narain said, India was increasingly playing a strategic role in the Indian Ocean region and it could be called upon to protect sea-lanes from the Persian Gulf to the Malacca Straits. "Our procurement of weapons is based on this strategy," he added.

24 APR 2002

THE TELEGRAPH

Military review without CDS

India - 98 N News

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, April 20. — A key element to the reform of the military-management system — the institution of a Chief of Defence Staff — has been effectively buried.

In theory, the government has accepted the recommendation of the Group of Ministers that reviewed national security, but agreed to political consultations before effecting a switchover. Only token efforts have been made in that process resulting in existing management being a hotch-potch arrangement.

For the record the government would claim that most of the recommendations of the Group of Ministers have been implemented, that the process of integration is well under way, a procurement agency is in place as is a unified Intelligence machinery. Yet the critical elements have not been injected into the management system: the CDS and the Strategic Command.

Almost four years have elapsed since India announced nuclear weaponisation, but it has still not spelt out how its nuclear forces (strategic forces being the euphemism) would be structured,

commanded and controlled. Pakistan has made its position clear recently, perhaps to quell fears that its nukes could be taken over by extremists — religious or otherwise.

Clarity on command and control of nuclear assets is essential to reassure the international community that there would be no rash pressing of the "button", but it would appear that the government is waiting for domestic inter-service rivalry to dissipate before firming up its system.

The Air Force is pressing its case hard, claiming that it alone has "strategic" capacity as opposed to land forces. The Navy too claims strategic capability and points out that submarine-launched nukes are the most effective method of delivery. But the Indian Navy currently has no submarines capable of embarking long-range missiles, and it is unclear if the weaponisation programme has progressed far enough to include the production of nuclear warheads that could be fitted to a sub-launched missile.

For quite some time, the concept of a CDS was challenged, particularly by the former Air chief, but the present incumbent appears to be reconciled to a revised management system that is aimed at providing sin-

gle-point military advice to the government.

A little under a year ago, the government appeared close to taking the plunge until some objections were raised by the Opposition parties — Madhavrao Scindia being the most vocal objector — and a half-way measure was taken.

While political consultations on the CDS were agreed, a Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (one step lower) was appointed, supposedly to ensure that the nitty gritty was in place when the final decision was taken.

There are increasing apprehensions within defence circles that the government is hesitant to go much further down the reform route, which would tilt the balance in favour of the forces at the cost of the *babus* in the defence ministry. A section of the uniformed community suspect that bureaucrats are scuttling the CDS process and covertly pointing to the "dangers" of a defence supreme.

Yet there are serious doubts if a CDS will, in effect, be a *supremo*. The GoM recommended that he be a four-star general — like the Army, Navy and Air Force chiefs — but actually be the "first among equals".

On the ground the CDS would actually be less than equal, having only the strategic command and an integrated organisation for the Andaman and Nicobar islands under direct operational control.

That would, several senior officers maintain, reduce the CDS to a "glorified staff officer," for the men who commanded the three services would actually have more muscle at their disposal. Even in ceremonial terms, a four-star general commanding a service would outweigh the CDS.

It is that watered down version of a CDS that is said to have prompted the present Army chief to express a preference for his current job. That could hold true for the heads of the Navy and Air Force too.

There is much speculation about who would be appointed the CDS if and when the decision is taken. The front-runner, according to unofficial assessments, is the present Chief of the Integrated Defence Staff, Lt Gen Pankaj Joshi. The grapevine has it that the formal appointment will be made only when the tenure of the present Army chief is close to winding down.

Another good idea lost in the mire of bureaucratic ignorance and worse.

India begins patrolling Malacca Straits

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, APRIL 19. India has started 'trial' patrolling of the strategic Malacca Straits through which cargo worth around \$500 billion is transported annually. A Navy off-shore patrol vessel joined the U.S.-led patrolling effort, aimed mainly at surveillance and deterrence, in the middle of this month after the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) cleared the proposal in February.

After analysing the experience gained from this 'pilot' patrolling, Indian warships are expected to patrol the area from the

Andaman sea end where the armed forces have already set up a unified command headed by a naval officer.

The U.S. ships from the Seventh Fleet will approach the area from the Japanese side.

The patrolling would be jointly monitored by the Deputy Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral S. V. Gopalachari, and the Seventh Fleet Commander, Vice Admiral James Wallace Metzger.

The two officials had detailed discussions on the subject during the Indo-U.S. Navy-level talks held in Chennai earlier this year.

Efforts to draw India into the American

2074 9-08 N. S. S. H. 10-11
security loop began immediately after the September 11 strikes. The beginning was made by reviving the Defence Policy Group (DPG) last year.

The DPG is the institutional mechanism to promote closer military ties and is headed by top civilian officials from the Defence Ministries of both countries. It was followed by a meeting of the three Service-level executive steering groups. The involvement of the Navy signifies its coming of age in the region. The Malacca Straits is encompassed by Sumatra on one side and Malaysia on the other.

Border fencing to continue

Statesman News Service

Kashmir blasts

NEW DELHI, April 18. — A combative government insisted today it would continue the work of fencing along the border to check infiltration of militants, smugglers and other illegal entrants into Jammu and Kashmir, and urged Pakistan to "learn from past failures" and not thwart Indian attempts.

Reacting to a series of explosions in the Raghbir Singh Pura area of Jammu, where work is on to erect a fence within Indian territory, a foreign ministry spokesman said: "This effort of the military regime in Pakistan to raise concern and retard the fencing work will fail as surely as other such efforts have failed in the past." The government re-

JAMMU, April 18. — Pakistani infiltrators today set off a series of blasts in RS Pura sector, Jammu, damaging three iron pickets used for construction of fence along the International Border. A BSF patrol spotted the intruders near Pital border outpost around 4 a.m. and fired at them. — PTI

mained determined to take necessary action to put an end to such interference, the spokesman said, with a threat that "Pakistan would do well to learn from past failures."

Despite substantial build up along the border, infiltration of militants has not seen a tangible decline. With summer setting in,

snows along the passes would begin to melt and the Armed Forces anticipate an increase in attempts by militants to infiltrate in greater numbers.

Meanwhile, the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Omar Abdullah, was "holidaying" in Dubai, while All-Party Hurriyat Conference leaders were holding talks with Mr Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, chairman of the National Kashmir Committee, recently formed by General Musharraf.

New Delhi said Mr Abdullah did not meet the leaders in Dubai and his presence there around the same time was nothing more than a coincidence. "Mr Abdullah was on holiday in Dubai," a foreign ministry official said.

19 APR 2009

THE STATESMAN

India clinches deal on US radar

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, April 18. — For the first time in a decade or more, India has bought a major weapons system from the USA.

The decision to buy the ANTPQ-37 weapon-locating radar was on the anvil for a while and a senior US army officer had come during the recent defence exhibition here to discuss the radar. Officials said the deal is worth about \$146 million and possibly, about eight radars will be purchased.

The radar was initially offered to India about 5-6 years ago, at a time when Indo-US ties

were warm.

This weapon can find the location of the enemy weapons, whether it is artillery or missiles. In fact, about 10 enemy weapons can be simultaneously located by the system, manufactured by Raytheon.

The deal was clinched by a Procurement Board team currently in the USA. The team has also submitted a list of about 20 weapon systems that it wants to purchase from that country.

The purchase comes over the protests of the Parliamentary Defence Standing Committee which had called for the evaluation of a similar Ukrainian radar and also, WLRs from other

countries.

The chairman of the committee, Mr ML Khurana, and another member, Mr Suresh Kalmadi, had written to the defence ministry about it, saying the US radar was possibly too expensive.

When the US authorities had initially offered the WLR, it was opposed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation which said the indigenous Rajendra radar could be modified and made into a WLR.

The USA withdrew its offer after the 1998 Pokhran II nuclear blasts and imposed sanctions and the DRDO is still working on the Rajendra.

10 APR 2000

THE STATESMAN

CBI wants Amir Reza extradited

Kinsuk Basu
Kolkata, April 17

H/M
16/4

THE CBI has decided to try for the extradition of Amir Reza Khan, brother of Asif Reza Khan and the mastermind behind the American Center attack. Aftab has confessed that it was Amir who hatched the plot and monitored its implementation from Dubai.

Aftab's role was solely to raise the Asif Reza Commando Force. Though India has an extradition treaty with the UAE, it had never been seriously followed till Aftab's extradition, which was largely possible because of the FBI's pressure. The CBI has thus stepped up its in-

teraction with international agencies to force this extradition as well.

Despite the failure to get Dawood and Anees Ibrahim extradited, CBI is optimistic in this case as it believes the FBI might be interested because of Amir's reported proximity to the likes of Masood Azhar.

A resident of Beniapukur, Amir left the city immediately after a CID team visited his house in search of his brother Asif while probing the Khadim abduction case. After the arrest of Happy Singh, an accused in the case, a CID team left for Kathmandu to trace his links and stumbled upon Asif's name.

In his confessions to the CBI and Kolkata Police, Aftab admitted that

Amir stayed with him in Dubai, helping him carry out all operations after Khadim. Impressed by his abilities, Aftab left it to Amir to chalk out the plan to avenge his brother's death.

Amir had since kept in touch with Jamaluddin Naser, local facilitator of the Kolkata attack. Naser would inform him of every move over e-mail from a cyber café in Tiljala. Police have seized some hard disks and CPUs from this café.

The CBI says if Amir is brought back, police would know the exact nature of Aftab's dealing with terrorist outfits, whom he paid a part of the ransom money. He had links with Jaish, Harkat and Lashkar.

17 APR 2002

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Cellphone bar in J&K, N-E

1679.
9-11 & N-E ends

Swati Chaturvedi
New Delhi, April 15

HOME MINISTER L K Advani has pulled the plug on a plan to allow cell phones in the security-sensitive State of Jammu & Kashmir and the North-east. A plan to allow mobile telephones in these areas was piloted by Communications Minister Pramod Mahajan in the Cabinet.

The plan said that mobile telephony would knit these parts of the country long suffering from neglect and help control secessionism. Advani, however, was worried.

"My ministry objected because we had some security concerns. As of now the plan is on hold," he said.

Security agencies say that they will not be able to carry out proper surveillance if cell-phones are allowed without check especially in Jammu and Kashmir. Technical factors such as the distance was cited as the reason for the tapping problem.

Says a senior Intelligence Bureau (IB) official: "We told the Home Minister that we would be unable to monitor the phones while following the procedures. Our fear, was that the

terrorists would misuse the cell phones as an effective means of communication."

Under the rules laid down by the Supreme Court all telephones can only be tapped after a written authorisation of the Home Secretary.

When the plan was first mooted by Mahajan, Home Secretary Kamal Pande, sounding the alarm bell, briefed Advani before the Cabinet meeting while expressing his reservations on the plan, sources said. At the moment even public call booths with STD and ISD facilities are banned in the Valley.

As a compromise some members of the Cabinet suggested that initially cell phones be allowed in the North-east but Mahajan wouldn't yield.

He apparently argued that such facilities would help create pro-India feelings in the sensitive states especially in J&K and said it was this kind of discrimination that fostered secessionism.

Sources said the Home Ministry was clear that allowing cell phones in the Valley was a security risk.

Reports of the IB and RAW have said that telephone intercepts are instrumental in fighting terrorism.

Meet to discuss missiles

Srinjoy Chowdhury in New Delhi

April 14. — Senior Army generals will discuss the state of the missile arsenal at the commanders' conference beginning on Monday.

A long presentation on surface-to-surface missiles or SSMs such as the short-range Prithvi and the medium-range Agni is likely to be made on the second day of the three-day bi-annual conference. The director-general, artillery, Lt-Gen RS Nagra will participate in the conference.

Prithvi was inducted into the Army in the nineties, but the Agni, which has a range of about 1,500 km and is nuclear-capable, is in the process of being inducted. The Air Force also wanted it. The artillery arm will be in charge of the missiles.

The other major issues are the Army's perspective plan and Lt-Gen (retd) HS Bagga's report on promotion prospects of the officer cadre.

The Bagga report calls for higher promotion rates of middle-level officers like majors, lieutenant-colonels and colonels. It also speaks of a new post for senior Army lieutenant-generals called colonel-general.

A handful of principal staff officers and Army commanders (about a dozen) could become colonel-generals if the government agrees. The adjutant-general, Lt-Gen SS Grewal, may also be involved in these discussions.

Lt-Gen Pankaj Joshi, chief of the integrated defence staff, will also speak to the commanders on matters of joint service command.

A chief of defence staff is yet to be appointed. Other speakers will include Mr Jaswant Singh and Mr George Fernandes. The five Army commanders will speak on operational preparedness, and this will be particularly relevant as far as the western, southern and northern Army commands are involved as they face Pakistan and virtually the entire Army is on the borders.

The northern and eastern commanders will speak on the internal security situation.

Besides, looking at promotions and awards, the commanders will focus on two important issues — shortage of accommodation for married officers and improvement of medical facilities at the Army Base Hospital and the Research and Referral Hospital in the capital.

THE STATESMAN

STD, ISD ban yet to be lifted

Statesman News Service

JAMMU, April 14. — As the ban imposed by the Cabinet Committee on Security on STD/PCO and Internet facilities in Jammu and Kashmir continues, restoration of these services seems to be a distant possibility.

The chief general manager, J&K circle, Mr UC Chhabra, said they had requested the Centre to restore these facilities.

A decision in this regard would be taken by the CCS, Mr Chhabra said.

The facilities were snapped at a time when tension along the borders was increasing and people were worried about their relatives at those places. Besides, it has affected the life of more than 6,000 STD/PCO operators

in the state. However, there is no ban on private STD connections and those in government offices. People who have no STD connections in their houses are suffering the most.

The ban on STD and PCO facilities imposed four months ago is causing a great deal of inconvenience to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited had withdrawn Internet and STD facilities from the entire state on 28 December last year.

Intelligence agencies in the state feared that defence-related information was being given out through PCO booths.

They argued that militants were using computers for communicating with their contacts across the country. They were also using

PCOs. Though the CGMT said the department was not incurring any revenue losses because of the ban, officials said they had to bear a loss of over Rs 7 lakh for 2,000 STD/PCO operators per day

“You can easily work out the revenue loss for 5,000-6,000 operators,” said an official. Many feel the ban cannot be effective because a militant can easily use STD connections of an individual to contact associates.

The CGMT also refused to comment on the fact that operators were planning to move court against the decision to withdraw such facilities. The Kashmir Traders Manufacturers Federation said the move had rendered thousands of youths jobless.

THE STATESMAN

India, Russia exploring new areas of weapon systems

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MOSCOW, APRIL 11

MOVING away from traditional "buyer-seller" relationship in the defence sector, India and Russia are exploring fresh areas for joint research, development and production of new generation weapon systems.

Emerging from a three-hour one-on-one meeting with his Russian counterpart Sergei Ivanov followed by delegation-level talks, visiting Defence Minister George Fernandes said both countries were ready to go beyond "brahmos" cruise missiles and SU-30 MKI multi-role

fighter projects for the joint development of futuristic weapon system. He, however, declined to divulge details saying "once we arrive at some conclusions and come to some decisions we will let you know."

In his statement after "highly fruitful and productive" talks with Ivanov, Fernandes said further development of military-technical co-operation stands on "very firm foundations" and is poised for further growth in the mutual interests of two countries.

"A few years back, we jetisoned 'buyer-seller' relationship with India in military-technical field (arms trade) and in some projects have moved forward not

only in technical, but also scientific cooperation in Defence," Ivanov said.

"I personally do not see anything horrible in it, our two countries have reached such a degree of deep mutual trust, including in the political sphere, which permits us to move ahead in such (sensitive) projects," Ivanov added. To resolve problems of defence spares and servicing Russia is offering India "offset" schemes and licensing, Ivanov said adding all new contracts signed in recent years took care of bottlenecks in the past.

Fernandes and Ivanov told reporters that to combat against terrorism was one of the key as-

pects of Indo-Russian security interaction through Defence and Foreign Ministries and Security Councils of the two countries.

"We in Chechnya and India in Jammu and Kashmir, who have been facing terrorism for a long time, were among the few who could see the Taliban threat emanating from Afghanistan much before September 11, and were closely co-operating in fighting this menace for regional and global security," Ivanov said.

Declining to comment on Indo-Pak relations, Ivanov, in response to a question, said Russia understands and shares India's concern over cross-border terrorism. "We know, that like in

Chechnya and Afghanistan, terrorism mixed with narcotics was also present in Kashmir, we share India's concerns," he said.

During their talks, the duration of which is unprecedented for Russian Defence Ministry protocol, Fernandes and Ivanov discussed a whole range of issues pertaining to regional and global security including the situation in Afghanistan, Central and South Asia. Though no new contracts are expected to be signed during Fernandes' visit negotiations for the acquisition of Kiev class aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov, leasing TU-22 M strategic bombers and AWACS planes are said to be high on the agenda.

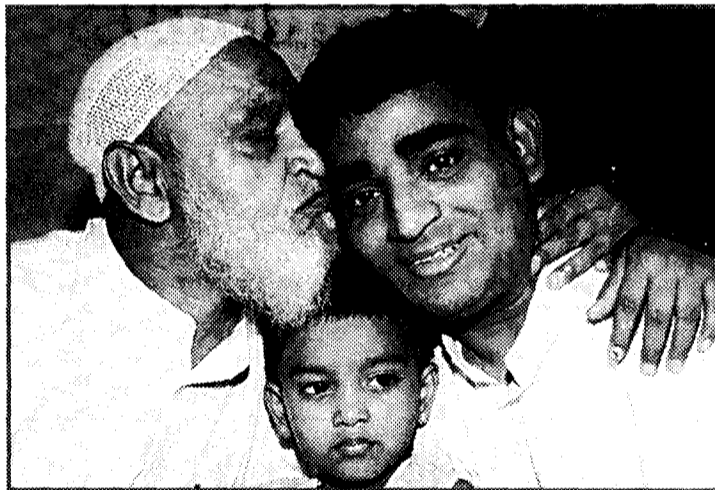
Afroz released on bail after 4 months

Mumbai
9 APRIL

AFTER SPENDING four months in jail, suspected al-Qaeda terrorist, Mohammed Afroz Abdul Razak, was on Monday released from Byculla prison following bail granted to him by a special court here. Afroz was released at 10.30

granted bail on April 5 by designated judge, A.P. Bhangale, who heard a petition filed by his lawyer Mubin Solkar.

The court released him as the police failed to file chargesheet against him within the stipulated 90-day period after his arrest on December 3 from Navi Mumbai. Police had earlier invoked Poto provisions against Afroz



THE LONG WAIT

a.m. after the jailor considered the release memo issued by the registrar of the special court. His father, Abdul Razak and other family members received him outside the prison. The 26-year-old Afroz was

but dropped the charge later saying the alleged offences committed by him were triable under the IPC only. The judge ruled out the police plea to drop Poto charge against Afroz

PTI

AIDS test for Forces recruits

Srinjoy Chowdhury
in New Delhi

April 8. — Those joining the armed forces every year may be tested for AIDS, according to a health ministry note presented to the Union Cabinet last Tuesday. In the note, the defence ministry has said: "...in future, (the) armed forces may have to screen personnel who are coming forward to join the armed forces."

Armed forces have different requirements as compared to the civilian sectors, the ministry said. Troops have to be deployed in high-altitude areas like Jammu and Kashmir and North-east and in counter-insurgency operations.

The ministry makes the point of "the combat situation and handling of bleeding wounds". This suggests that armed forces personnel can contract the HIV virus very easily.

The Army is involved in counter-insurgency operations in J&K and the North-east. The casualty figure in these operations is significant.

In Jammu and Kashmir alone, over 5,000 officers and jawans have been wounded since 1989. In 1989-99, 4,701 personnel, including 331 officers, were

wounded. "This makes it more imperative to have "pre-employment HIV screening if considered necessary," the ministry said.

A senior Army Medical Corps officer said the Army was ready to follow this system. "We are beginning to start this. All recruits have to go through a complete check-up anyway, an Elisa test for AIDS will not be a problem," he said. Armed forces recruits of the USA, Thailand and West European countries are tested for AIDS, the note said. The test results will be kept confidential. All candidates tested will be counselled before and after the tests.

Approximately, 1,00,000 officers and men join the Army, Navy and Air Force every year. About 1,200 officers and 55,000 men join the Army alone. Comparatively smaller numbers join the Air Force and the Navy. The exact number of HIV cases in the Army is not known, but some Army personnel reportedly picked up the virus while part of a United Nations mission in Cambodia.

In the note, the health ministry has agreed with the defence ministry. Pre-employment HIV testing, it said, "may be carried out voluntarily with pre-test and post-test consulting... the result shall be kept strictly confidential"

Arms and the CAG

Avoidable cross-fire

The Defence Ministry may have sown the seeds of yet another controversy by issuing detailed clarifications on media reports that were based almost entirely on the draft observations of the Comptroller and Auditor General. They were, indirectly, a refutation of conclusions drawn by that Constitutional authority on the acquisition of certain weapon systems. Coming as they do in the wake of the Defence Minister having resorted to another indirect method to debunk the CAG's findings on the import of aluminum coffins, those clarifications would lend themselves to being viewed as an attempt to join issue with the agency mandated to ensure that government money — public money — is not squandered. Which amounts to throwing a spanner in the works of an established system of checks and balances. By no means a happy development.

The defence community would, however, insist that it has valid cause. Over the years it has noted with concern that the CAG reports do not restrict themselves to monitoring financial aspects of defence expenditure, adherence to prescribed procedures and so on, but venture to question the technical quality and suitability of the military stores acquired. Which the armed forces rightly believe is not only beyond the purview of the CAG, but contend that the agency lacks the expertise upon which such value judgments can be based. The efficacy of guns, radars, missiles and aircraft cannot be evaluated by accountants, defence experts argue. Military purchases, the defence community emphasises, are not made in free-market situations. Apart from the political and diplomatic aspects of defence procurement, equipment is not available off the shelf at convenient prices which can be relied upon to stay in one place while the babus and the accountants dither and push files around, not to speak of guaranteed product support and supply of spares thrown in. There is also the question of whether to buy abroad or try indigenous development. These factors, some with strategic implications, cannot be tabulated by financial specialists. But since the CAG reports are public documents and have a certain authenticity about them, the forces often find themselves in the dock — unfairly at times. Such clouds of suspicion exacerbate the conditions in which defence officials are becoming increasingly wary of selecting or recommending particular systems for acquisitions. The purchase process is already so bogged down in red tape and the search for safeguards that the forces are unable to fully utilise what is provided for capital outlay in the budgetary allocation. It would not be in the nation's security interests to allow such conditions to drift. A system of checks and balances is critical to democratic functioning.

Special court grants bail to Afroze in sedition case

Police fail to file charges, may book him under MCOCA

Times News Network

MUMBAI: In another major setback to the Mumbai police, Mohammed Afroze (26), the alleged Al Qaida operative who is in judicial custody on charges of sedition, was on Friday granted bail by a special court here.

Special judge A.P. Bhangale granted him bail for Rs 1 lakh and a surety of like amount since the police had failed to submit a chargesheet within the mandatory period of 90 days. It is not clear why the police failed to file the chargesheet within the stipulated period.

Afroze's lawyer, Mubin Solkar, told TNN that Afroze's parents had not been able to arrange the bail amount immediately. The court order came at about 4.15 p.m. "We will furnish the bail amount on Saturday morning and he will be a free man," Mr Solkar said.

However, there is a possibility that the police

might arrest Afroze under the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA), which gives the police 180 days in which to file a chargesheet. Minister of state for home Kripashankar Singh had told TNN on Tuesday that Afroze would be detained under MCOCA. But special public prose-

cutor Ujwal Nikam refused to comment. He said that the bail order would not be challenged. "There are various aspects to the case and you can consult the investigating officer," he said.

Earlier, Mr Solkar told the court that Afroze had written to him from inside Byculla jail on April 3, requesting him to plead for bail. The letter was attested by the jail authority and sent to Afroze's father, Abdul Razzak.

However, this time too, Afroze told the court that he did not want bail. He said he was undergoing a meditation course conducted by the Art of Living Foundation while in jail and would like to finish it. "I would have to pay Rs 5,000 for the course outside, while in jail it is free of cost," said Afroze who, according to the police, belongs to the Al Qaida terror network.

► Afroze's lawyer clueless, Page 3

Matters of meditation

Times News Network

MUMBAI: The police did not produce Afroze in court when the bail application came up before Mr Bhangale at about 12.15 p.m. Public prosecutor Rohini Salian opposed it, stating that Afroze had already told the court he did not want bail.

Mr Bhangale, however, insisted that Afroze be produced before him since he had written a letter to his lawyer after the last hearing asking him to apply for bail. Mr Bhangale also rejected the prosecution's request to post the matter for Saturday and ordered that Afroze be produced before him during the day.

Accordingly, the police produced Afroze in court at 2.45 p.m. Refusing bail, Afroze said, "My guruji has asked me to undergo an advanced course in meditation which runs until April 10." To this, the court asked, "What if you are advised to undergo another course after April 10?" Afroze said that he would decide the issue on that day.

Sukhoi to be made in India

HTC
SP

HT Correspondent
Bangalore, April 4

HINDUSTAN AERONAUTICS Limited (HAL) is gearing up for a Rs 25,000-crore project to manufacture 140 Russian Su-30s at five of its facilities in India.

HAL chairman N R Mohanty said the company would make the aircraft and engines with "100 per cent technology" with licence from Moscow. For instance, HAL will acquire the know-how for the single crystal blades used in Su-30s. The design papers and technical manuals will reach soon.

HAL is investing about \$150 million as capital and \$ 500 million more for other expenses, including tools, non-standard equipment and deferred revenue expenditure. The cost of each Su-30 bought from Russia is \$30 million and the licence fee for making the entire batch of aircraft is \$ 286 million.

"When we make the aircraft we will ensure it costs less than direct imports. Obviously since the project continues till 2017 there will be an escalation cost included in the project estimate, but we will keep within that," Mohanty said.

Each Su-30 would need six engines in its lifetime. The first batch of 50 Su-30s, acquired directly from Russia, would come fitted with two engines each. The scheduled delivery date for the first batch is 2003. HAL will make the required engines for all the 190 Su-30s. It will deliver the first aircraft to the Indian Air Force by 2004 and all 140 Su-30s by 2017. HAL would also make all the accessories, aggregates and add-ons for the Su-30 fleet.

HAL has entered into an

Russia promise on N-ties

RUSSIA ON Thursday vowed to continue nuclear cooperation with India and reiterated its commitment to help India in the field of nuclear energy.

But it urged New Delhi to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. "We know about the opposition by some countries, but Russia will continue to provide assistance to India on nuclear energy.. Moscow will help its strategic partner in this field," Russian Federation's Security Council secretary Vladimir B Roushailo said. "We hope that construction of the Kadankulam nuclear power plant project, continues as per schedule," he said.

HTC, New Delhi

agreement with the Russian Ilushin company to make the multi-role transport aircraft (MTA). Mohanty said the estimated cost of the project was \$350 million and both countries would share it equally.

The MTA steering committee will meet in the third week of April and submit the final report to the Government. "We'll take six years to deliver the first MTA," Mohanty said.

HAL has also bagged the order from Israel to make technical kits for converting Boeings into cargo aircraft. Israel had short-listed HAL along with two companies from US and China. After a tough round of bidding and lobbying, HAL got the order.

President gives assent to Pota *PF trust to review interest rate*

Times News Network
NEW DELHI: The controversial Prevention of Terrorism bill, 2002, which required a joint sitting of parliament to pass it last week, received presidential assent on Tuesday. Now known as the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002 (Pota), the act has come into force with immediate effect.

President K.R. Narayanan signed the bill, which has been gazetted as Act No. 17 of the year. Pota seeks to deal with heinous crimes like subversion, insurgency and terrorism. It replaces the prevention of terrorism ordinance (Poto) first promulgated in October last year and re-promulgated in December.

With its passing, India has joined two other countries, the U.S. and the UK, which have also passed laws to fight terrorism in the wake of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington in September last.

The President also approved a related law, the Passport

(Amendment) Act, 2002. It seeks to confer on the government the power to suspend the passport and related travel documents of subversives and terrorists to curb their international movement. The act seeks to amend the Passport Act, 1967.

The President has also given his assent to the Inter-State Water Disputes (Amendment) bill, 2002, and the Institute of Technology (Amendment) bill, 2002.

The water legislation amends the earlier act of 1956 to enable expeditious disposal of inter-state water disputes by tribunals in a time-bound frame.

It also provides for effective implementation of the judgments and seeks setting up of a data bank and information system at the national level for each river basin.

The Institutes of Technology law seeks to bring the Roorkee University into the fold of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), as the country's seventh IIT.

PF trust to review interest rate

Times News Network

NEW DELHI: A special meeting of the Central Board of Trustees (CBT) of the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) has been called by labour minister Sharad Yadav on April 12 to review the overall situation regarding interest earnings by the fund.

The CBT in its earlier meeting on January 22 had recommended 9.5 per cent interest to EPF subscribers for 2002-03. But it had decided to meet in March to review the overall situation, since the financial position regarding interest would be known only after the budget.

According to an EPF official, "the finance ministry has informed the organisation to bring the interest rate down by 0.5 per cent." He said with a reduction of 0.5 per cent in the Special Deposit Scheme of the RBI, total interest receivable in the PF would be reduced to the tune of Rs 238.42 crore.

AP-2002

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Prepare or perish

Given the confusing signals emanating from across the border, India has little choice but to put its armed forces on high alert, writes **Brijesh D. Jayal**

The very basis of India maintaining professional armed forces, as against merely ceremonial ones, is for the nation to be able to call upon them to deliver should the need arise. That call has been made and our armed forces remain in a state of high alert. In plain terms this means that should events dictate, they must be ready to implement their plans, which are clearly spelt out and, as part of regular peacetime training, rehearsed to the last detail.

Of late, some commentators have reflected on the wisdom of such a move. Some caution that such a posture can result in an unintended flare-up, leading to a conflict which may degenerate to an exchange of nuclear weapons. Others wonder whether such a show of force is not counter-productive to modern day diplomacy. Still others reflect on the prohibitive costs of maintaining such a posture for any length of time.

While these are legitimate concerns, it needs to be recognized that we live in a harsh world where not all share our values of tolerance, fair play and forbearance. Having been at the receiving end of a proxy war within our sovereign borders for years, one that is encouraged and fuelled by Pakistan and has cost the nation over fifty thousand lives, any hint of caution conveys national under-confidence.

Fortunately, there appears to be a general consensus on the nation's resolve to maintain this alert status till evidence was forthcoming that Pakistan is actually putting its money where its mouth was on the day of its president's much-heralded broadcast in January. While India needs to take heart in its newfound resolve, it is instructive to delve deeper into the current security environment in our neighbourhood and its potential for our security.

Many have wondered at the sudden bonhomie between the United States administration and General Pervez Musharraf. Both George W. Bush and his secretary of state, Colin Powell, never fail to shower praises on him. While countries like Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan are willing and active supporters of the American anti-terrorist effort in Afghanistan, without having been promoters of the problem in the first place, they find no mention in the US's high profile political pronouncements. Thereby hangs a tale, which emphasizes why India cannot afford to let its guard down.

A series of articles appearing in the *Washington Post* will take the reader through the behind-the-scenes activities in the highest echelons of the US administration as they unfolded in the aftermath of terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Within two days of the event, Powell had got a green signal from President Bush to put Pakistan "on notice" since any action contemplated in Afghanistan was contingent on Pakistan's support.

Seven specific demands were listed for Pakistan's compliance. In essence, they related to Pakistan stopping all support to al Qaida and taliban, stopping Pakistani volunteers from joining the taliban, over flight and landing rights to US forces, provision of intelligence information and curbing domestic expression of support for ter-



General on a tight leash

rorism against the US, its friends or allies. The crucial one was that should evidence implicate Osama bin Laden and the al Qaida network and should Afghanistan and the taliban continue to harbour them, then Pakistan was to break diplomatic relations with the taliban government and assist the US in destroying them. As the *Washington Post* concludes, "in so many words the US was telling Pakistan to help destroy what its intelligence service had helped create and maintain: the taliban".

According to the *Washington Post*, while putting forward these demands to the Pakistani intelligence chief, General Mahmoud Ahmad, who was in Washington at the time, Powell's deputy, Richard Armitage, warned that they were not negotiable and all seven had to be accepted. Secretary Powell then spoke to Musharraf. "As one general to another", he said

"we need someone on our flank fighting with us. Speaking candidly, the American people would not understand if Pakistan was not in this fight with the United States." Shorn of diplomatic icing, the ultimatum to Pakistan was unambiguous and General Musharraf got the message.

'Confidence in the government, the armed forces and all our institutions must replace the atmosphere of hype and sensationalism'

Thus started the first US tactical operation of its declared war on international terrorism. An operation cloaked under the guise of friendship and diplomacy, uncompromising and bold in its approach, yet one whose torturous route was unpredictable not only to those laying its foundation, but even to the finest of strategic thinkers within the US administration. Today, even as the Afghanistan campaign has achieved notable successes, that unpredictability remains and continues to get more intriguing as more information surfaces.

According to a recent Press Trust of India report, after the US air campaign started, Pakistan evacuated thousands of its military and intelligence advisers who had been working with the taliban. Musharraf won American support by warning that losing a large number of Pakistanis would jeopardize his political survival.

Already Musharraf was beginning to feel the weight of Pakistan's internal contradictions. It has also been reported that while the US approved a limited evacuation, the operation allegedly slipped out of control and an unknown number of taliban and al Qaida fighters managed

to join in the exodus. Today many al Qaida and taliban fighters have melted into the thin air along with Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar. Whether the "slipping out of control" was unintended or a clever Pakistani ploy is uncertain. For now, Indian security planners must take seriously reports that many of them have moved into Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

There is little doubt that while the US administration continues to shower praise on Musharraf, actually it has him on a very short leash. Recall media reports that the famous January speech by Musharraf was first cleared with the US state department. With the president himself on a tight leash and having to contain forces that have been surreptitiously created and nurtured by his country over the years, few even in the US administration can at this stage predict the durability of Musharraf and the future course of Pakistan's internal dynamics. Those looking for stability in the region can only hope that American plans for pulling Pakistan back from the brink of fundamentalist anarchy to a moderate Islamic state will succeed. But responsible nations cannot plan national security on the basis of hope. Moreover, what other periodic rewards will Musharraf demand and when will Kashmir feature on that plate?

The question that we need to ask ourselves is this. Even if the Indian government grants Musharraf the benefit of doubt, how does it judge whether he will be allowed to deliver? How does Musharraf reconcile his newfound moderate and anti-terrorist stance with his "Kashmir in our blood" hype? And since the internal dynamics of Pakistan are too fluid for even Musharraf to predict, what options does India have?

The US is fully aware that without targeting the Pakistan state, its international war on terrorism cannot even take off. Its first few gambles with Musharraf have paid off, albeit with some hiccups. It is also aware that if a fundamentalist of the Zia ul-Haq mould replaced Musharraf, the "general to general" ploy would fall on deaf ears. The US must undoubtedly have alternate plans, should things start to go wrong with their favoured general in Pakistan.

Meanwhile, India cannot remain an idle bystander. With the backbone of al Qaida and the taliban still at large and perhaps closer to us than before, and with Pakistan being forced to rein in many of its illegitimate creations under pressure from abroad, the lack of instant preparedness on India's part will amount to consigning national security to hope rather than substance. This makes it mandatory for our armed forces to be prepared and on station, whatever the attendant costs or risks.

In the delicate security environment that confronts India, national institutions and the public have a crucial role to play. Confidence in the government, the armed forces and all our institutions must replace the atmosphere of hype, sensationalism and criticism. Such solidarity will convey our resolve to the international community, act as a powerful morale booster to our armed forces and in the final analysis prove to be a powerful deterrent to war. Display of emotion and solidarity once our soldiers' bodies start returning will be of little use.

The author is a retired air marshal of the Indian air force

✓ 425 VOTES IN FAVOUR, 296 AGAINST ✓

Joint session passes Poto

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Stateaman News Service

NEW DELHI, March 26. — The anti-terrorism Bill was passed tonight in the joint session of Parliament amid a great deal of acrimony. The Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance will now become Prevention of Terrorism Act (Pota) after presidential assent.

In the division pressed for by the Opposition at the initial stage of consideration of the Bill, it was passed by 425 votes to 296. The Opposition staged a walk-out after the result was declared. The Bill was finally adopted by voice vote.

All BJP allies except the Trinamul Congress voted for the Bill. Trinamul members were absent. Mr Ajit Panja voted for Poto, despite being asked by the Trinamul leadership to abstain.

Politics, rather than the merits or demerits of the Bill, was at the core of the debate that lasted for nine hours and forty minutes. The Central Hall witnessed a sharp division down the middle in the rare joint sitting of members of both Houses.

Mr LK Advani, who moved the Bill for passage, argued that it should not be treated as an ordinary law and order issue. The legislation was being brought in view of the war India is facing in the form of cross-border terrorism.

The government's discomfort was caused not so much by the Bill and its various provisions as the riots in Gujarat, Mr Narendra Modi's booking of the offenders at Godhra, who belonged to the minority community, under Poto and the

subsequent withdrawal of that action.

Mrs Sonia Gandhi said the government's "manipulating the process of Parliament for promoting a divisive ideological agenda is like subverting the Constitution". The Bill has divided the country's polity, she said.

"It's highly regrettable," said Mr Arun Jaitley that "we as a nation are sending a wrong message to the world in the face of attack on the country from terrorist groups from outside".

"Don't forget how America stood before its President after 11 September ... and here the Congress, after the Bill was defeated in the Rajya Sabha, talked of a divided Parliament and a divided polity," Mr Jaitley said, referring to Mrs Sonia Gandhi's remarks.

The Marxists, too, lived up to their reputation. Mr Somnath Chatterjee was by far the best speaker, focussing on possible abuse of the law to undermine Fundamental Rights. He wondered if the government's plea that the Bill was necessary because of UN resolutions adopted after 11 September should make the home minister change his name to Mr LK 'Bush'. He expected the Prime Minister to intervene to let the joint sitting know what the government has to say on Mr Modi's contemptuous remark on Parliament.

Mr Advani and Mr Jaitley, trying to justify the Bill by citing how more than 61,000 civilians were killed by terrorists over the past 15 years as against 8,000 soldiers who lost their lives in the four wars since Independence, could not make the Opposition change heart.

THE STATESMAN

27 MAR 2002

MISUSE OF PROVISION, SAYS CONG.

President convenes joint session on POTO

By Neena Vyas and
Javed M. Ansari

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9.1.3 N. Selwals

NEW DELHI, MARCH 22. The President, K. R. Narayanan, has convened a joint sitting of both the Houses of Parliament on Tuesday, March 26, to consider and adopt the Prevention of Terrorism Bill, a day after the defeat of the Bill on POTO in the Rajya Sabha.

The sitting will be held in spite of strong protests from the main Opposition parties, which charged the Government with "misusing" the Constitutional provision instead of trying to evolve a genuine consensus by sending the Bill to a select committee as is normally done in the case of all significant Bills.

The Bill has created ripples both within the National Democratic Alliance (the National Conference abstained during voting in the Upper House) and in the Opposition ranks (though the AIADMK supported it). But this evening, it seems that the Government was able to get the NC to assure it of support for POTO.

The Government wants to replace the POTO with legislation and after the Bill fell through in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday — 113 members voted in favour of the resolution moved by the Congress against the Bill and 98 against it — a joint sitting is the only option left to it. While the

Government is presenting the Bill as proof of its commitment to eradicate terrorism, the Opposition and several civil rights activists have pointed out that a more draconian piece of legislation, the now-repealed Terrorists and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, was not able to achieve that purpose. It had led to few convictions and wide

Gujarat backtracks

By Manas Dasgupta

GANDHINAGAR, MARCH 22. In an apparent bid to wriggle out of the tight spot it finds itself in over the alleged discriminatory use of the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (POTO), the Gujarat Government, on the eve of the joint session of Parliament, has decided to withdraw for the time being the application of POTO against those arrested in connection with the Godhra train carnage.

**POTO later, if needed:
Page 11**

misuse by police.

The Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Pramod Mahajan, has already conveyed the President's message convening the joint sitting to the presiding of-

cers of the two Houses. The joint sitting will be chaired by the presiding officer of the Lok Sabha, in this instance P.M. Sayeed, Deputy Speaker. The Home Minister will move the Bill and commend it to the House, and there will be a debate and voting at the end of the day. Both sides of the political divide will be gathering their full forces. The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, has already postponed his visit to Russia.

Since it will be free seating in the Central Hall, where the joint sitting will be held, voting will be by slips mentioning the division numbers of the MPs. This is only the third time this Constitutional provision enabling a joint sitting to consider legislation is being used.

In fact, the Congress MP, Kapil Sibal, has argued that on the previous occasions the joint sitting only helped iron out minor differences related to amendments and specific clauses in the Dowry Prohibition Bill and the Banking Services Commission (Repeal) Bill. The Constitutional provision, he argued, was not meant to be a device to "undermine the authority of any one House". His charge was that pushing through such legislation, on which the polity was divided, could only create further divisions among the people.

THE HINDU

23 MAR 2002

SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 2002

POTO: REJECTION AND RESURRECTION

J. P. N. felicit

HAVING SUFFERED AN embarrassing defeat on the floor of the Rajya Sabha over the passage of the controversial Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance Bill, the BJP-led Government has adopted its declared fallback strategy — getting the Bill passed in a special joint session of Parliament, which is expected to be convened next week. With the ordinance about to lapse, this may be (from the narrow perspective of the Centre) the only way of keeping the new terrorism law alive. But, in the prevailing circumstances, the decision to convene a joint session of Parliament to see the legislation through is a truly unfortunate and regrettable thing. It is deplorable that a piece of legislation on a subject of vital importance to the whole nation such as terrorism looks as if it will worm its way into the statute books because the Government — which, by and large, has been heedless of the Opposition's concerns — wants to play the numbers game. Given the level of political acrimony that POTO has engendered, given the widespread fears of the possibility that such a law will be misused and given the total lack of confidence that the BJP-led Government will use this severe piece of legislation in a fair and equitable manner, it is only appropriate that any new terrorism law should have been endorsed through political consensus and not by merely marshalling — in the wake of a defeat in the Upper House — the required parliamentary numbers.

True, the BJP-led Government's right to convene a joint session of Parliament under Article 108 cannot be formally or legally questioned. But it has lost the moral right to use the constitutionally-sanctioned provision of a joint parliamentary session because of the very manner in which POTO, right from the very inception, has been thrust on an unconvinced Opposition and a wary and apprehensive public. In the first place, something as important as a general law on terrorism — particularly one with significant implications for basic human rights such as the right to

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life, personal liberty and privacy — should not have been issued summarily by means of an ordinance. Following the Government's inability to pass the Bill in the Lok Sabha, it resorted to the same emergency provision to promulgate POTO once again (this time with some minor amendments). In other words, when POTO is resurrected in a joint session of Parliament next week, it will be after a short, troubled and procedurally questionable history which reflects the Government's disinclination to forge a political consensus around a new terrorism law.

The fact that joint sessions under Article 108 have been called twice before are not really germane in the present context. The first time (1961) it had to do with a disagreement between the two Houses over specific amendments to the Dowry Prohibition Bill. The second occasion (1977), which followed the Rajya Sabha's rejection of the Banking Service Commission (Repeal) Bill that was passed by the Lok Sabha, may have occurred in formally similar circumstances. But the matter under scrutiny was hardly commensurate in importance with a law such as POTO; moreover, it was also relatively free of the bitterness and antagonism which has resulted in deep fissures in the polity today. In a way, the defeat of the Bill in the Rajya Sabha reflects an increased confidence in the Opposition, which has resisted the mischievous campaign that opposing POTO is, by default, to be unpatriotic or soft and accommodating on terrorism issues. The carnage in Gujarat, where POTO was used against the cold-blooded perpetrators of Godhra but not even contemplated against the communally charged up savages responsible for the ensuing bloodbath presents a disquieting picture about how the law is conceived and how it could end up being used. Given all of this, while a joint session may marshal the required numbers, it will hardly muster what is really required in the present circumstances — trust, credibility and good faith.

THE HINDU

23 MAR 2002

23 MAR 2002

GOVT HOPES TO SALVAGE POTO AT JOINT SESSION

Terror Bill defeated in Rajya Sabha

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, March 21. — The Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (Poto) was defeated in the Rajya Sabha tonight with 113 members voting against it and 98 members in favour. The Bill moved by Mr LK Advani, along with a Congress-sponsored statutory resolution disapproving Poto, was put to vote at 10 p.m. after 27 members spoke for and against it.

The government now plans to convene a joint session of Parliament on Tuesday to pass the legislation, called "draconian" by the Opposition.

The passage of the Bill had turned into a prestige fight for both the government and Opposition. Members previously reported sick — such as Congress leaders Mr Manmohan Singh and Mr Ramnath Goenka — or those reportedly out of station, including Mr Shatrughan Sinha of the BJP, turned up to vote. But there were absentees from both sides.

The government could muster only 98 votes even with the Nationalist Congress Party and the AIADMK voting for it. The Opposition, with a strength of 137 members in the Upper House, had 113 present and voting against.

Three members of the National Conference, four of the BSP, and a lone MP of the Loktantrik Congress stayed away. So did rebel Akali Dal MP Mr Gurcharan Singh Tohra.

Parliamentary affairs minister Mr Pramod Mahajan later said the only surprise was that the

National Conference had not previously indicated that they would stay away from voting.

After the Ordinance was defeated, rural development minister Mr Venkaiah Naidu said: "The Opposition and the forces who are opposing the law against terrorism can rejoice for the next three or four days. The government is committed to have the law ... and will get it approved by Parliament at the earliest. An official announcement about the convening of the joint session would be made soon."

Replying to the Congress resolution, Mr Advani said: "I do not understand how a Bill seeking to curb terrorism becomes communal." Hitting out at the Congress, he said those opposing the Bill today and claiming to be champions of civil rights had abused the NSA, MISA and such other laws. The Tada was extended several times but members never said it was challenging secularism.

"The Bill aims to help fight terrorism and give conviction and a tool to security personnel in dealing with difficult situations. Amendments have been made as suggested by the Nationalist Congress Party. We wanted the Congress to suggest some more amendments ... but it never did that," he said.

The battlelines were, however, drawn much earlier than that, and the Ordinance was fated to be defeated today. The government now hopes the Bill would be approved at the joint session on 26 March. This will be the first parliamentary joint session in 25 years.

BJP blames Cong

NEW DELHI, March 21. — The BJP tonight squarely blamed the Congress for the defeat of Poto in the Rajya Sabha. This would "send a wrong signal to the world", it said.

"The Congress is responsible for the defeat of this important Bill. Now the only way out of this is to convene a joint session of Parliament so that the country is able to tackle the menace of terrorism which it has been facing for the last two decades," Mr VK Malhotra said. — PTI

THE STATESMAN

22 MAR 2002

Joint session lifeline for beaten Bill

FROM OUR SPECIAL
CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, March 21: After an expected, but still humiliating, defeat in the Rajya Sabha, the Vajpayee government tonight resolved to take the Prevention of Terrorism Bill to a joint session of the two Houses of Parliament.

The Bill, moved by home minister L.K. Advani with a last-ditch appeal to the Opposition, was thrown out by the upper House by 113 votes against and 98 in favour at the end of a long debate that contin-

ued late into the night.

Parliamentary affairs minister Pramod Mahajan said after the defeat that the government was pushing ahead with its plan for a joint sitting on March 26. In the combined House, the government has a comfortable margin: 407 against 375. Even if Mamata Banerjee's Trinamul Congress abstains — as it did in the Lok Sabha where the Bill was passed earlier in the week — victory should be assured.

Mahajan said that "first thing tomorrow morning" a note would be sent to the President requesting a joint sitting to be sum-

moned. This would be the third such session in history.

He said he had already got Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's permission to proceed.

Advani indicated much the same. "The outcome (in the Rajya Sabha) was broadly on expected lines. But we are determined to pursue," he said.

Rajya Sabha members voted on two resolutions — one moved by Congress' Kapil Sibal "disapproving" the Bill and another by Advani seeking passage. On both counts, the government was defeated by 113 to 98.

The voting took place along

ee's ally, and its arch opponent Jayalalithaa's ADMK voted in favour.

The Congress ensured full strength. So did the Left. Ailing Singh, actor Dilip Kumar, industrialist R.P. Goenka, veteran N.K.P. Salve and Ghulam Nabi Azad were present and some members from the Northeast were flown in.

It was, however, deserted by its coalition partner in Maharashtra, the Nationalist Congress Party of Sharad Pawar, which voted with the government.

With the NDA also bringing in members like Lata Mangeshkar and Shatrughan Sinha, 211 MPs in a 239-strong House were around to vote.

Mahajan said the only surprise was that three members of the National Conference and one of the Akhil Bharatiya Loktantrik Congress — both NDA partners — stayed away.

"We could narrow down differences between the ruling NDA and the Opposition to a dozen in number," he said.

"The difference was so wide, the strength of the non-NDA members was considerable and

there was a gap of about 50.... But we tried to mobilise as much as we could and we lost by only 13 or 14 votes," Advani said.

Earlier in the House, while moving the Bill, he had expressed surprise at the Congress' opposition to the Bill. "I know about Left parties but not Congress," Advani said.

"Poto is not any harsher than any of the existing laws, especially (the now-repealed) Tada. It will definitely help to secure convictions instead of sending the accused into preventive detention from where they become hijackers."

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22 MAR 2002

CPM doublespeak on terror Bills

9-0-1 members HFI 22/13

Arindam Sarkar/Ashok Das
Hyderabad, March 21

THE CPI(M) today continued to burst on Poto even as its trust on Poca appeared unflinching. The party announced that it would not implement Poto in West Bengal and Tripura even if it is passed by Parliament at a joint sitting, and called upon non-BJP parties not to implement Poto in their States as well.

But asked about Poca, Politburo member Prakash Karat retorted: "You can't equate Poca with Poto because Poto can be used against political oppo-

nents, but Poca is mainly aimed at tackling organised crime and anti-social elements. Buddhadeb can elaborate more on this. But let me tell you, there will be extensive discussions before the Bill is passed in Bengal."

In his fiery best, Karat said Poto would pose serious threat to the country's democratic system. If the NDA Government convenes a joint session of Parliament to pass Poto now that the Bill has been defeated in the Rajya Sabha and if indeed it becomes a law, all political parties against the "draconian" Bill would be appealed to fight it

tooth and nail. No effort, he said, would be spared to block the Bill in Parliament as the entire Opposition is against it.

Questioning the legitimacy of the BJP — which rules only in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh — in enacting the law, Karat said all parties should take a common stand and even BJP allies like Naveen Patnaik and Char-drababu Naidu should think twice before implementing it.

Terming Poto as more dangerous than Tada, he said under this legislation, any organisation without any qualification could be described as a terrorist

outfit and its members and supporters locked up. Citing how Poto could be used selectively, he said 62 Muslims had been booked under Poto for the Godhra incident but not one person booked for the subsequent pogrom in which over 750 people were butchered in Gujarat by majority Hindu mobs.

He pointed out how Tada was misused against Government employees in Himachal Pradesh and farmers in Gujarat.

Asked whether the non-BJP States should take a common stand on the activities of the VHP and Bajrang Dal and ban

them, Karat said the issue would be discussed thoroughly by the party.

While ruling out any alliance with the Congress, he said there could be "cooperation" with it on issues like Ayodhya and Gujarat. Admitting that the Congress has a largely secular mass base, he said there is need to mobilise it along with other secular and democratic forces. He also hinted that in case the present political dispensation does not

change after the next elections, his party would not be averse to support the Congress to keep the BJP out of power.

DRACONIAN PIECE OF LEGISLATION: CONGRESS

Safeguards against 'misuse' of POTO, says Advani

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D8
NEW DELHI, MARCH 21. The Home Minister, L.K. Advani, today strongly defended the promulgation of the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (POTO), saying the existing laws were inadequate to fight growing terrorism and assured that all safeguards had been incorporated to prevent misuse of the new measure.

Introducing the Prevention of Terrorism Bill, 2002 in the Rajya Sabha for consideration, amid stiff opposition from the Congress, the Home Minister said India had been experiencing a threat to its national security for the past two decades. There was not much debate at the time of enactment of the TADA in 1985. However, the POTO was sent to the Law Commission for approval.

While observing that a democratic set-up did not need laws of this nature, Mr. Advani strongly objected to the Opposition charge that the Bill had been introduced with some ulterior motives. "Please do not attach any motives... Please do not question the bona fides..." Terrorism was posing a serious threat to national security and the existing legal framework was inadequate to handle the situation.

Describing the "misuse" of

Article 352 (imposition on internal emergency in 1975) as the "worst form of abuse (of the Constitution) I have ever seen", Mr. Advani said there were apprehensions that fundamental rights could be suspended. "It did happen. We were behind bars... Journalists could not report even Parliament."

He said he did not expect the Congress to oppose the legislation as such laws were already in existence in Maharashtra and Karnataka. "We had hoped that they would not hesitate to pass the law. It was a mistake in assessment on our part."

Initiating the debate, the senior Congress leader, Arjun Singh, charged the Government with bringing in the legislation with an eye on elections after having failed to cash on the issue of Ramjanmahhoomi. How-

ever, the people had rejected the Government's move as was evident in the recent Assembly elections.

Through their verdict the people had already rejected the POTO, he added. "POTO was born out of that assessment which did not help you... POTO has been abandoned." He demanded to know from the Home Minister why even after the Government knew about the impending terrorist attack on Parliament on December 13, it did not take any steps to prevent it as the name of the Bill suggested — Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance. He questioned the basic purpose of bringing in the Bill, saying its purpose "was change of strategy to use it for political influence".

Mr. Singh said the "air of innocence" which the Home Minister wanted to create around himself on the issue would fall off by itself and need not be "pierced". If the law was passed, it would be "open to the same exploitation and misuse".

Earlier, the Congress member, Kapil Sibal, described it as a "draconian piece of legislation" that could be misused against the citizens. "POTO is a weapon which can be used selectively for jingoism in the country," he said while moving a statutory

resolution asking the House to disapprove the Prevention of Terrorism (second) Ordinance promulgated by the President on December 30 last.

"We tried to enter into a dialogue with the Government on the issue, but unfortunately the Government did not cooperate," he said. The law even in the hands of an ordinary police officer could make "victims" out of ordinary citizens.

Ram Jethmalani (Independent) referred to the time when sitting in the Opposition benches in the House he had mounted a vitriolic and passionate attack against the continuance of TADA. Because of this everyone now assumed that he would as vigorously oppose POTO. In this context, the former Union Minister for Law, Justice and Company Affairs sought to clear a few ambiguities with regard to the proposed legislation.

"It is true that TADA was misused against minorities, but all innocent laws are capable of being misused and this is no reason why they should not be on the statute books." Respecting the apprehensions of those who felt that POTO was another shape of TADA or even "a worst disaster", he said every Government must be given the benefit of the doubt — UNI

POTO Bill defeated

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 21. The controversial POTO Bill was defeated late this evening in the Rajya Sabha, and now it will be placed before a joint sitting of both the Houses.

THE HINDU

CONGRESS, BJP ISSUE WHIP

Parties brace for POTO battle

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 20. Political parties on both sides of the divide are mobilising their forces for a show of strength in the Rajya Sabha tomorrow when the Bill on the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance will be taken up for consideration and passing.

The Congress has made known that it will press for a division and that it will make every effort to defeat the "anti-democratic and draconian" legislation in the Rajya Sabha even if it means a joint session of Parliament in which the treasury benches can have their way. The party strongly countered the propaganda and "whispering campaign" by the BJP that it was not serious about voting against POTO. The Congress had voted against it in the Lok Sabha and would do so again tomorrow in the Rajya Sabha, its leaders emphasised.

However, although Opposition parties together have an upper hand in the Upper House, with the AIADMK deciding to vote in favour of the Bill and the Bahujan Samaj Party

likely to abstain (as it did in the Lok Sabha), the Opposition strength has dwindled. The Nationalist Congress Party may vote in favour of POTO. The final vote difference between the two sides may be much smaller than the earlier estimate of 20 to 25 made by the Government.

The Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Pramod Mahajan, has asked all NDA allies to ensure full attendance of its members in the Rajya Sabha tomorrow. The BJP itself has issued a whip to all its MPs to be present and vote in favour of the legislation which, the party says, is the answer to the menace of terrorism.

The Congress has asked some of its MPs who are now hospitalised in different parts of the country to try and come for the crucial vote tomorrow. R.P. Goenka, its member now in a Kolkata hospital, has been contacted, so has been Bimba Rai- kar, admitted to a hospital in Bangalore. Manmohan Singh, Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, down with hepatitis, has also been asked to attend the House tomorrow. "Only a few members for whom it is impossible to come will be

excused," a party leaders said, pointing out that one member was abroad getting his son treated in a hospital, and some MPs were away as part of a parliamentary delegation.

The BJP, the Congress and other parties want to undo what happened in the Lok Sabha when there were many absentees on both sides, more among Opposition parties, when POTO was adopted by a majority of 116 votes on March 18.

'It may send wrong signals'

The Parliamentary Party spokesman, Vijay Kumar Malhotra, said there was a global campaign against terrorism and India, which was the most affected by this menace, should show the resolve to fight it. "If a joint session is convened, a message goes all over that all the people of the country are not united to root out terrorism."

Pointing out that similar anti-terrorism legislation had been passed by many countries unanimously, he said it was expected of the Opposition parties to extend full support to such legislation.

THE HINDU

21 MAR 2002

Panel not for over-reliance on Russia for arms

J. S. N. K. S.

HD 1
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By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 20. While expressing "partial satisfaction" regarding purchase of defence equipment from Russia, the Standing Committee on Defence has suggested the floating of global tenders to enable the emergence of competitive prices. This approach may prove advantageous particularly in the purchase of state-of-the-art equipment, observes the committee in its 15th report tabled in Lok Sabha today.

The panel said that with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, India could not depend totally on Russia for the supply of equipment and spares at reasonable rates. As "friendship rates" were no longer available from Russia, global tenders should be floated for all purchases of equipment and no advance payment made for any

future acquisition.

The recommendations come days before the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, is due to visit Russia to finalise equipment purchases. India is interested in certain hardware such as nuclear submarines for which Russia is interested in advance payment. Moreover, with the lifting of sanctions and the change in the global environment after September 11, western arms companies are soliciting the Indian defence establishment and would like to displace Russia as the premier supplier of defence equipment.

In its reply, the Defence Ministry defended the reliance on Russia. Its contentions were partially upheld by the Parliamentary Committee. The Ministry said that after the break-up of the Soviet Union, defence purchases were carried out on commercial terms that include

payment in hard currency and making advance payments "as is the case with purchase of defence equipment of western origin".

The Ministry informed the committee that dependence on Russia would continue as a result of considerable reliance on that country's equipment in the past. Besides, it continued to offer state-of-the-art equipment which was often denied by the western countries. Moreover, in time of crisis, such as during the Kargil war, Russia was "overwhelmingly forthcoming" in meeting India's immediate requirements. It was also argued that Russia's military capacity had been largely preserved. Efforts were being made in the direction of joint development and production of defence equipment with Russia as opposed to a buyer-seller relationship.

20 MAR 2002

21 MAR 2002

Govt. prepares for joint session on POTO

By Neena Vyas and Javed M. Ansari

NEW DELHI, MARCH 19. The Vajpayee Government has finalised a plan to request the President, K.R. Narayanan, to convene a joint session of Parliament — most probably on March 26 — to pass the Prevention of Terrorism (POTO) Bill in the event of the Rajya Sabha defeating the bill passed by the Lok Sabha on Monday.

With the numbers stacked up against the Government in the Upper House, the ruling party has no illusion about the fate of the bill, when it comes up for consideration on March 21. The Government's calculations suggest that those opposed to the bill outnumber those in its favour by about 25 in the Rajya Sabha. But a large number of independent and nominated members of the House make exact calculations difficult and the numbers on the two sides, may,

in fact, be much closer.

A constitutional provision allows the Government to call for a joint session in the event of a "conflict of opinion" between the two Houses. If the session takes place on March 26, it will be the third time this provision is used. On May 6 and 9, 1961, there was a two-day joint session to pass the Dowry Prohibition Bill. And on May 16, 1978, a joint sitting was convened to adopt the Banking Service Commission (Repeal) Bill.

According to the Constitution, if a bill is defeated in the Rajya Sabha, the Government will send a note to the President requesting him to call for a joint session. The President will then communicate his message to both the Houses. The Parliamentary Affairs Minister will write to the Lok Sabha Speaker (in this instance, the Deputy Speaker) and the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. The joint

House will meet in the Central Hall of Parliament with the Speaker (now the Deputy Speaker) in the Chair.

Although there have been some attempts by the Treasury benches to sell the view that the Congress is divided on POTO, the fact is that in the Lok Sabha it voted against it and will do so in the Rajya Sabha. The party spokesperson, Jaipal Reddy, said categorically "we will do everything possible to defeat POTO in the Rajya Sabha and again in the joint session." Whips have been issued on both sides of the political divide, and the ruling combine and the Opposition are trying to ensure that there is no absenteeism. There are also reports that the Congress may move a statutory resolution disapproving POTO, but even if that goes through, it will not make a material difference to the final outcome.

In the Lok Sabha, a number of

MPs — both from the Opposition and the ruling coalition — remained absent when the bill was voted upon on Monday, 264 in favour and 148 against.

The Trinamool Congress and the Bahujan Samaj Party MPs either walked out or were absent. The legislation, being sponsored by the Government as the solution for terrorism, has resulted in some turmoil in both the Opposition and the Treasury camps. In the Lok Sabha, the AIADMK voted in favour, along with the DMK, and the Trinamool, a member of the NDA, walked out in protest.

Even today, the BJP spokesperson, V. K. Malhotra, tried to equate "opposition to POTO" with "encouragement to terrorists" and he denied, what was evident, that this very same plank had been used by his party in the recent round of Assembly elections in which it was defeated.

Handwritten notes: 48-1 20/3

Joint session likely for Poto passage

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, March 19

HT-1
20/3
D & N Weekly

THE GOVERNMENT has tentatively slotted a joint session of the two Houses of Parliament on March 26 to seek Poto's passage if the draft legislation is rejected by the Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

The Bill, already passed by the Lok Sabha, can be placed before a joint session — to be convened by the President — only if the Upper House rejects it.

The ruling coalition has 98 members (minus AIADMK and NCP) against the Opposition's estimated tally of 137 in the Rajya Sabha. But the NDA has an advantage if the combined strength of the two Houses is considered. NDA partners (including the Trinamool and the TDP) add up to 407, with the AIADMK (17) and the NCP (9) contributing another 26. The two parties had voted for Poto in the Lower House. In contrast, the non-NDA parties account for about 349 members.

After making some efforts to persuade floor leaders not to block the Bill in the Rajya Sabha, the Treasury Benches have reconciled to the idea that it may get defeated in the Upper House.

Though the Opposition hopes to round up its MPs for the voting, there is a slight sense of wariness. This is largely because of apprehensions that over a dozen MPs who have been denied renomination in the current round of biennial elections to the Upper House could vote against the party line. Then there are instances like CPI-M member Bharati Ray going abroad on a parliamentary delegation or the death of Dayanand Sahay, an Independent, who was expected to vote against Poto.



SONIA GANDHI

In recent months, the Opposition scored a double victory when it got the Rajya Sabha to nail down the Government on Balco and Ayodhya.

Angered by reports that a section of the Opposition may help the Government pass Poto in the Upper House, Congress chief Sonia Gandhi has reportedly instructed her party leaders to ensure maximum participation of the party's MPs in the House to defeat the Bill.

A joint session is convened when a Bill is defeated by one of the two Houses and the Government requests the President to call for such a sitting. During the session, only two days' notice is required. The sitting, held in the Central Hall, is presided by the Speaker and in his absence, the Deputy Speaker — as will happen in this case. Two rostrums will be set up for the Bill's opponents and supporters.

Such a sitting has been held only twice. The first was on May 6 and 9, 1961, when the Dowry Prohibition Bill 1959 was passed. The two Houses got together again to pass the Banking Commission (Repeal) Law on May 16, 1978.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

20 MAR 2002

Poto passed in Lok Sabha

5/1
19/3

9- Defence & National Sec

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, March 18. — It was a victory of sorts for the government when the Bill on Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance, introduced in amended form, was today passed by the Lok Sabha despite the Trinamul Congress and the BSP abstaining from voting. The Bill was passed by a voice vote.

The Opposition led by the Congress staged a walkout when the Bill was put to voting.

They perhaps realised that their numbers were not enough to defeat the Bill though some NDA allies abstained.

The home minister, Mr LK Advani, assured the House that the government had taken enough safeguards to see to it that the provisions

of the Bill were not used against innocent people by the police. Poto was repromulgated after amendments by the President.

The Bill, however, may not become an Act if it is rejected by the Rajya Sabha, chances of which are strong as the Opposition is unanimous in its objection.

The NDA does not have a majority in the Rajya Sabha to get the Bill passed.

Sensing the fate of the Bill in the Upper House, the government indicated that it might convene a joint session of Parliament in case the Bill was defeated in the Rajya Sabha. But

if the Trinamul and the TDP oppose the Bill in the joint session, it is likely to be defeated.

The BJP spokesman, Mr VK Malhotra, said that the government had already incorporated major amendments in Poto to make it acceptable.

Mr Malhotra said the government did not wish to go on promulgating ordinances on Poto and parliamentary approval was a must.

He ruled out the need to invoke Poto against the VHP and Bajrang

Dal activists who stormed the Orissa House recently. "Poto cannot be applied to incidents like breaking glass in government buildings," Mr Malhotra added.

The law is for terrorists and not for those who violate the law and order, he asserted, while pointing out

that the VHP had distanced itself from the incident.

In the Lok Sabha, the Congress, the CPI-M and the Samajwadi Party opposed the Bill on the ground that it went against the basic right of individual freedom.

The government defended the Bill, saying it was needed to meet new challenges from terrorists and their accomplices operating in the country.

The DMK and the AIADMK, though critical of the Bill, favoured it on the condition that it would not be abused against anyone on the ground of religion or caste.

The Trinamul Congress and the BSP abstained from voting and the Opposition led by the Congress walked out

Shore up Defences

Think Big on Strategic Dimensions

By C UDAY BHASKAR

¹¹⁻¹⁰
THE annual defence expenditure (DE) for the financial year 2002-03 has been budgeted at Rs 65,000 crore. This marks an increase of Rs 8,000 crore from the last year for only Rs 57,000 crore had been actually spent against a budgetary provision of Rs 62,000 crore. In other words, Rs 5,000 crore were returned as unspent and it merits recall that this is the second year running that money is being returned — last year the amount was Rs 4,126 crore. The inability to spend funds allocated is reflective of the procedural constraints that now obtain and this is an area that needs to be redressed with urgency. With the military currently re-deployed on the Line of Control and also called out in Gujarat, certain fundamentals need to be reviewed. But before detailing the Indian experience, an overview of the US example may be instructive.

In February this year, the US announced its defence budget for the forthcoming year and the centrality of terrorism and 9/11 needs little reiteration. The contrast with India is striking. The US defence outlay is to be increased by a staggering \$48 billion — that will take it to \$379 billion. A steady increase has been planned so that the defence tab peaks at \$451 billion in 2007. Thus the increase of \$48 billion is greater than the defence budget of the second largest spender, Japan, which spends \$ 46 billion. India incidentally spends under the equivalent of \$13.5 billion annually — about 2.5 per cent of the GDP on defence.

Depending on the perspective one wishes to adopt, the Indian DE can be condemned for being too large (the guns versus schools argument), or for the fact that it is too little (stagnation and obsolescence of a one million plus military). However, over the years there is a sense of *deja vu* about the DE — ‘been there, seen it’ kind of feeling as regards the inflexibility that has crept into the annual budgetary exercise. The standing costs of maintaining a military of under 12 lakh personnel (the army is the most manpower intensive and has over a million troops) leads to a recurring expenditure that accounts for almost 70 per cent of the total DE.

Thus only 30 per cent is available for the modernisation of the existing inventory or acquiring fresh and technologically relevant platforms. The inflexibility is further

compounded when we note that the army, the lead service in numbers, which receives 55 per cent of the total DE has to spend as much as 82 per cent of its total allocation on standing costs and has a meagre 18 per cent for modernisation and acquisition. The other two services have a different pattern but their relatively smaller size and fiscal outlay inhibits their ability to alter the leitmotif of the Indian DE — stasis and inflexibility.

What merits scrutiny and spirited debate is the strategic underpinning of the country's DE and here some questions need to be interrogated candidly. Four aspects warrant mention. At the macro level, the Indian DE is still perceived as part of non-plan expenditure and is clubbed with interest payments, major subsidies, grants, pensions et al. This classification was made when the centrally planned

^{18/3}
 harnessed to nurture the overall national development effort. But they have been rejected for the harsh reality is that neither state nor society seems to be ready to evolve a synergistic strategy that has two tangible long-term benefits — reducing the pension bill and harnessing a trained gene pool in the larger development effort (education, health, infrastructure and so on) that will ultimately determine India's overall security.

The third element is the inflexible accretion of single service capabilities that do not appear to be underpinned by an astute comprehension of the politico-military objectives of the state. For instance, India has been grappling with state-sponsored terrorism and low-intensity conflict for 15 years but it took a Kargil war and the attack of December 13 to catalyse the entire system. The contrast with the US example warrants notice. The Pentagon had to confront terrorism as a challenge only post-9/11 and the strategic underpinning at the budgetary level is already manifest. The US defence outlay is huge by any standard but the comparisons are not quantitative. What is germane is that the US security establishment has come up with a definitive orientation and policy objectives to the budget exercise within six months of 9/11 and this is clearly discernible in the various budgetary allocations that have been made in individual services all the way up to 2007.

Which brings one to the final point of strategic underpinning — what does India want to do with its undoubtedly professional military machine in the near future? Defence of the nation and protection of territorial integrity are inherent but there must be a higher level of politico-military co-relation and here the need to “strategise” is urgent. By current standards, the Indian DE will be in the order of Rs 500,000 crore over the next five years — or about \$100 billion. This is not an immodest amount and the entire defence and military machine must have a clear strategy about the kind of capabilities the country needs to acquire that will enable it effectively to deal with challenges that range from weapons of mass destruction at one end to terrorism at the other. The challenge is to think big and think clearly so that comprehensive national security is enhanced.

IN BRIEF

- With a large proportion of the defence expenditure going on recurring costs, very little is left for modernisation
- Retired defence personnel must be utilised for national development
- There must be a definitive orientation towards tackling terrorism

command economy was divided into development equals plan effort and all others as non-plan.

However, the implicit semantic suggestion is that this sector is a burden on the exchequer but inevitable like interest payments and such like. Thus the need to bridge the defence-development divide must begin from the semantics of policy and many experts have been urging such a change for years but in vain.

The second strategic determinant is the reality that a huge gene pool of manpower from the defence outlay is being abandoned to fend for itself post-retirement. Most military personnel retire after 15 to 20 years service and are entitled to a pension for life. The current defence pension bill is under Rs 11,000 crore and will increase progressively as the pensioners increase. Various schemes have been mooted to absorb the approximately 60-70,000 service personnel who retire annually so that their experience and expertise can be

MEA, Army differ on deployment

18/3 9.00 AM
Nilova Roy Chaudhury
in New Delhi
5/4

March 17. — There is a widespread view that the decision to deploy troops along the Indo-Pak border has reached a stalemate.

The foreign ministry feels full-scale deployment needs to be continued. The armed forces, however, feel that, other than some diplomatic benefits, nothing much has been achieved and India needs face-saving ways to try and get out of the impasse.

Three months after the attack on the Parliament and around ten weeks since India deployed troops in offensive positions, the foreign ministry cites "the slow throttling of Pakistan's economy resulting from deployment, as a major gain". Facing a cash crunch, available funding for state-sponsored militancy has reduced; what percolates down to militants is definitely less, the ministry says.

Diplomatically, no country has denounced India or said it needs to desist, a senior official said. There has been sympathy for India's point of view, post 13 December, that no sovereign country could afford to be bled by terrorism.

Although there appear to have been no tangible results, either in terms of decreased infiltration (what little has lessened is seen as more seasonal, to do with snowfall in the passes) or militancy or on the list of 20 wanted terrorists, officials talk of certain US assurances that

Deployment:

(Continued from page 1)

some action on the ground would be visible by June.

After June the monsoon set in and that would be a bad for troops, with the danger of shifting mines.

The armed forces have received some "positive bits of information", as yet not quantified, but individually adding up; Pakistan army irregulars are being disbanded, forcing the regular Pak army to take their place, thus spreading itself thinner; and the Islamisation of the Pak armed forces is lessening (with General Pervez Musharraf's resolve), which, if true, would benefit the Indian troops.

Armed forces, however, question how long the high alert can be sustained. How is troop morale to be sustained without any real action? Local commanders have now been given discretion to allow leave for jawans. Also, having deployed all along the border and not just in militancy prone regions, India has spread itself too thin to realistically prevent infiltration. The real test, a senior military official said, will be around April after the snows melt.

Militarily, the scope for a short strike with tangible gains is not available anymore, because Pakistani troops have been allowed to get too well entrenched.

Compensating farmers for use of their land for military uses (mostly mining the fields — this has become a crucial issue in the Sriganganagar sector in Rajasthan and in Jammu) has become a serious concern, even raised to the standing committee on defence.

No one is seriously considering withdrawal, before mid summer at the soonest, though senior officials, citing the Turkey-Syria stand-off of 1997, lament that India does not appear to have the stamina for a long haul.

Turn to page 6

THE STATESMAN

18 MAR 2002

Defence minister dedicates Advanced Light Helicopter prototype to nation

Russia trip
next month

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

BANGALORE, March 30. — Defence minister Mr George Fernandes will visit Russia early next month to finalise a proposal under which facilities would be set up in India producing spares for defence equipment received or bought from that country. The facilities, likely to be set up by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, would also be used for providing maintenance of Russian supplied defence equipment.

This was stated today by Mr Fernandes while delivering the first indigenously designed and developed Advanced Light Helicopter, *Dhruva*, to Air Chief Marshal S Krishnaswamy. The minister said he would also seek clearance for marketing the spares to other countries.

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

BANGALORE, March 30. — The Indian troops on the Indo-Pak border would not be pulled back till Pakistan met the demand for ending cross border terrorism, defence minister Mr George Fernandes said today.

Pakistan should also hand over the terrorists of Indian nationality from among the list of 20 submitted to it by New Delhi, Mr Fernandes said.

The minister was speaking to reporters immediately after delivering the Advanced Light Helicopter to Air Chief Marshal S Krishnaswamy.

Mr Fernandes said Pakistan's response to India's demands had been "negative" and there was "no question of any de-escalation" at the border even though there was no tension there. He added that India and Pakistan could talk only when "there is an atmosphere for talks" and not when Pakistan-based terrorists were going on a "killing spree" in India.

George no to pullout

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

"We also have reports that Taliban and Al-Qaida men have moved into Pakistan. There are enough reasons to believe that they are looking at Pakistan as a transit route to Jammu and Kashmir."

Asked about the CIA's perception that an Indo-Pak war could not be ruled out at present, Mr Fernandes said: "We do not share that perception because India has never initiated a war. We have always fought back."

Responding to queries about the Teluka probe and the consequent failure of the defence ministry to utilise the funds allocated for capital expenditure, he said his ministry had surrendered



Mr Fernandes

Rs 5,000 crore during the financial year ending tomorrow.

The probe, he mentioned recently at a CII meet, had "forced" officials in the defence ministry to "play safe" by not placing any orders for the services. He had admitted that almost 20 per cent of the allocation for capital expenditure had remained unutilised.

About the purchase of the British Hawk aircraft, the minister said he had not yet received the price negotiating committee's report.

Asked about the frequent fires in ammunition depots, he said these were largely due to storage hazards.

While only Rs 120 crore were spent earlier on maintenance of these depots, he had sanctioned Rs 500 crore for the purpose.

The minister added that the Centre is planning to spend Rs 3,000 crore in the next few years to safeguard the depots against accidents and would ensure that no ammunition was stored in the open.

Ten killed in shootout at Jammu temple

HT 1 8/13 9-0 8 Security

HT Correspondents
Jammu, March 30

AT LEAST 10 people, including four policemen, were killed and 21 injured when three militants attacked the Raghunath Temple in the heart of Jammu this morning, hurling grenades at the entrance and firing indiscriminately. Two of the militants were gunned down in a fierce encounter while the third is believed to be hiding in the temple complex.

Though police could neither disclose the sequence of events nor identify the group, the Islamic Front claimed responsibility for the attack. A spokesman for the group declared that it "marked the beginning of attacks the group has planned to avenge the maltreatment and harassment of Muslims in India". Police, however, maintained that the attack was targeted at the policemen, not the temple.

The militants hurled grenades and sprayed bullets at Raghunath Bazar around 10.20 am as they broke into a run towards the temple. Constable Nirmal Prakash of 136 CRPF Battalion said: "When I saw them heading for the temple, I cocked my rifle and fired at one of them. He died on the spot."

Another terrorist shot dead two Special Security Bureau (SSB) personnel and a Jammu and Kashmir policeman before entering the complex as the securitymen could not close the huge temple gates in time. The terrorist then opened fire at the temple complex.

A Shri Vaishno Devi pilgrim, Ratna Devi, was the first victim of the shootout. The militant broke into Guru Treta Dev temple within the complex and ordered the priest out. Finding himself surrounded by security personnel, he blew himself up,

10 DAYS OF TERROR

- **March 21-23:** Two killed, 53 injured in serial blasts
- **March 24:** Police air suspicion of Taliban infiltration as deaths continue
- **March 26:** Yasin Malik arrested
- **March 27-28:** Militants capture mosque in Badgam, siege ends next day
- **March 29:** Insurgency, encounters leave 16 dead
- **March 30:** Temple attacked, 10 killed

shattering the glass wall of the temple. Two AK-47 rifles and six grenades were found on him.

At the end of the two-hour encounter, torn bodies, streaks of blood and human flesh lay scattered around the temple complex. The incident sent shockwaves across the region and provoked widespread protests. Angry protesters set ablaze a car believed to have been used by the militants.

Jammu was tense with shopkeepers downing their shutters. The authorities fear the attack may trigger communal tension in the city. A general alert has been sounded in the region. The Jammu and Kashmir Panthers Party has called for a Jammu bandh tomorrow.

Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah will arrive here from Srinagar. He is likely to visit the temple and hold a meeting of senior police and civil officials. Minister of State for External Affairs Omar Abdullah condemned the attack on the temple, saying it was aimed at whipping up communal frenzy and asking the people not to fall into the trap.

Jammu and Kashmir Freedom Party president Sabir Ahmad Shah said the strike was a "painful act".

9-28 NSC/Scrub

Indian naval ships on goodwill visit to the Gulf

31/3
10/10

✓
✓

DUBAI, MARCH 30. India's sole aircraft carrier INS Viraat is leading a fleet of naval ships on a goodwill visit to the Gulf as an extension of the country's military diplomacy.

INS Viraat, accompanied by INS Shakti, a replenishment tanker, will dock at Mina Zayed (Port Zayed) in the UAE Capital, Abu Dhabi, today.

The two vessels will be joined by INS Mysore and INS Godavari which have already visited the Jubail commercial port in Saudi Arabia. INS Viraat is under the command of J.S. Bedi, Commander of the Indian Navy's Western Command.

In Saudi Arabia, the Indian Ambassador, Talmiz Ahmad, accompanied by A.R. Radhakrishnan commanding INS Mysore and C.G.S. Khan commanding INS Godavari, called on the Emir of Jubail, Abdul Mohisin Al Atiashan.

The two sides conducted exercises on Thursday marked by cross helicopter landing manoeuvres

and flag-hosting drills. The INS Viraat visiting UAE was originally HMS Hermes, first commissioned in the Royal British Navy on November 18, 1959. India purchased the vessel in 1986 and refitted it, making it serviceable for 10 years. It was formally commissioned in the Indian Navy on May 20, 1987.

The 28,700 tonne aircraft carrier got a fresh lease of life, returning to service in June 2001. It is fitted with sophisticated weaponry including "Barak" — an Israeli-made fully automatic anti-missile defence system.

New Delhi is now purchasing "Admiral of the Fleet Gorshkov", formerly known as "Baku", from the Russian Navy.

INS Viraat has a complement of 1,350 sailors, including 143 officers with the air group. The vessel has conducted manoeuvres in the recent past with the naval forces of Iran, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. — PTI

THE HINDU

31 MAR 2002

'SIMI planned to blow up Howrah bridge'

9.03 N Secular 2003 10-15
JALGAON, MARCH 29. An activist of the banned Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) from Bihar had planned to blow up the Howrah bridge in Kolkata, a senior police official said.

"It was revealed during interrogation that Hasib Raja, one of the prime members of the SIMI's central advisory committee, was the brain behind the operation," the city police chief,

Kulvant Kumar, said. Raja was arrested on March 18 in Kolkata by a special police squad and 500 gms of RDX was seized from him.

It was with this RDX that Raja planned to blow up the Howrah bridge but his plan was foiled, Mr. Kumar said.

Raja was remanded to police custody by a local court till March 30. — PTI

THE HINDU

30 MAR 2002

For the Greater Good

POTA is a Necessary Evil

By OLAV ALBUQUERQUE

9-2-2002
THE passage of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) was a foregone conclusion with the convening of both houses of Parliament. Now, with this drastic weapon in the armoury of the security agencies, intelligence gathering will get a boost since it is easy to pick up a suspect for questioning on the slightest pretext.

There is definitely a sound basis for apprehension that certain groups may be targeted by using this repressive law. Repressive laws are those Acts or ordinances which undermine the fundamental rights of the citizen. By any reckoning, these laws should be held infructuous at least to the extent that they violate fundamental rights.

It is in this context that the legal maxim coined by Jeremy Bentham, a 19th century legal philosopher, is worth examining. He said that any law must have the good of the majority at its core for it to be effective. This was what came to be known as the principle of utilitarianism.

Hence, the good of the state is of paramount importance and overrides all other considerations. POTA fulfils the ingredients of utilitarianism propounded by Bentham. For, without this law, security agencies found it arduous to gather evidence to either convict a suspect or at least secure custodial interrogation from the courts.

Absolute freedom can be abused and when this is done, the state loses its paramountcy to the individual. In any case, the individual needs the support system and security provided by the state for development. If the state is subjugated to individual vagaries, the Indian Union may go the way of the former Soviet Union which finally withered away, but not as Karl Marx envisaged.

However, although necessary, these repressive laws need to be enacted for only a specific time period and for a specific purpose. And once this objective has been achieved, these laws should lapse. For the fundamental rights guaranteed to individuals in Part III of the Constitution must not be devalued.

The judiciary upheld the validity of some of these repressive laws on the assumption that the good of the majority is supreme. For with rare exceptions, the Indian judiciary today is conformist and judge-made law which amplifies or narrows statutory law is infrequent. For judicial giants like Justice M C Chagla and Justice M Hidayatullah appear at rare intervals.

Consequently, it appears that

such acts as the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA) which lapsed in 1995, Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act (COFEPOSA), Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA), National Security Act (NSA), Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) and Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) were necessary evils although they infringed on the citizen's fundamental rights.

It was on this reasoning that TADA was enacted. It assumed that a suspect was guilty and put the onus on him to prove his innocence. Experience showed that it was misused by the police and so it was scrapped in 1995. But since organised crime continued to rise in Mumbai, MCOCA was passed. It was drafted by an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer who saw the courts acquitting criminals while their victims agonised. He gave

it was enacted. The law acts as a catalyst in metamorphosing society and engineering social change. It is through this process of social engineering that a welfare state achieves its objectives.

But the law has to be precise to achieve its objective. However, under MCOCA, the definition of 'organised crime' is vague. Also, the police can use a confession made to them provided it is not recorded by the officer who is investigating the case. Similarly, the word terrorist is difficult to define precisely because all terrorists are not necessarily criminals. And if the word 'terrorist' is not precisely defined, it is subject to the vagaries of judicial interpretation.

But the judiciary can narrow these definitions to minimise the scope for their misuse. Democracy is a government of the people and for the benefit of the people. So if there are those who undermine its very foundations, there is no alternative to curbing them.

In certain districts of Andhra Pradesh, Naxalites have allegedly been eliminated in fake encounters. These are again in flagrant violation of the rule of law. There can be no justification for these cold-blooded murders. But diabolical as it may sound, the greatest good of the greatest number is the sole criterion for passing these draconian laws. So, malcontents and iconoclasts who are detrimental to the survival of the state must be dealt with firmly.

It is on the basis of this philosophy that the US, Canada, the United Kingdom and even Japan have enacted anti-terrorist laws. The US, which is the bastion of democracy, has five anti-terrorist laws in force which make wide incursions into the fundamental rights of non-citizens. But then, it is the well-being of the majority which is at stake and by implication the survival of the state itself.

And so, with POTA, a nebulous menace such as terrorism may be countered. The cry that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter cannot be accepted when the very survival of the state is threatened.

For although those who govern the state may disagree violently with those iconoclasts who threaten its very foundations, when the latter's protests traverse beyond speech, their right to dissent cannot be taken lightly. If the twin evils of terrorism and organised crime are allowed to flourish, the state will eventually be undermined beyond repair.

IN BRIEF

- Laws like POTA are needed temporarily
- The survival of the state is of paramount importance
- The US has five anti-terrorism laws which infringe on the rights of non-citizens
- Individual rights can be subordinated in the cause of the greater common good

MCOCA enough teeth to overcome this lacuna.

The misuse of these draconian laws can be checked to some extent by setting up detention boards comprising retired judges of the Supreme Court or the high courts with an eminent IPS officer and a social worker on the board.

Under TADA, the police extracted confessions forcibly. POTA too is bound to be misused by a venal police. However, one has to balance conflicting rights. On the one hand, you have the right of society to be free from terrorists versus the right of the individual not to be unduly harassed by the law enforcers. But individual freedom has to yield to the common good. If the conviction rate under any of the repressive laws is high, we can automatically assume that the law has curbed the evil for which it was enacted.

Hence, though the individual's fundamental rights have been infringed upon, the law has eradicated or curbed the evil for which

Bleach swung arms deal

H Bula Devi in New Delhi

March 29. — Peter Bleach was the vital link in procuring the lethal cargo in the Purulia arms drop case, swinging a deal that made huge profits for the involved parties.

The details of the deal reveal how easily arms-trading rules can be contravened.

Bleach was instrumental in obtaining an end-user certificate (EUC), necessary for any purchase of arms and ammunition, from Bangladesh. Under normal circumstances, this wouldn't have sufficed, since the destination of the cargo was India. Sources said the discrepancy was overlooked as the suppliers stood to make a lot of money.

The consignment was apparently sold to Kim Davy by London-based Border Technology & Innovation, which bought the arms from a Bulgarian company, Kas Engineering. While BTI paid Kas \$78,110 for the consignment, it charged Davy \$169,090 for the same.

Bleach told officers that the first contact, a Danish arms dealer named William Roeschke, did not have enough stock to meet the demand. Roeschke then contacted another dealer, Peter

Haestrup, who got in touch with Bleach.

In August 1995, Haestrup, Bleach and Davy met in Copenhagen. Bleach told sleuths that Davy had been introduced to him as a contact for "a non-political group in India which is oppressed by the Communist government in West Bengal". Davy had said the delivery would be "several hundred miles to the west of Kolkata". The arms, he said, were needed by the group "to defend itself."

One of the concerns at that meeting was the route to be taken if the consignment was to be dropped near Kolkata. The meeting, however, ended inconclusively. Procuring the EUC and sufficient supply of arms were the problems the dealers could not sort out.

For the EUC, Bleach got in touch with a Bangladeshi company, Riverland Agency Ltd. Sources said the company was "most likely" the go-between in procuring the certificate.

Bleach and Davy then met in London in September the same year. Bleach got in touch with BTI for the required arms and ammunition. The consignment reached Burgas airport in Bulgaria on 10 December.

Seven days later, the consignment was dropped in Purulia.

THE STATESMAN

30 MAR 2002

Poto or MCOCA? Make up your mind on Afroze, judge tells police

Times News Network

MUMBAI: Special judge A.P. Bhangale on Wednesday sought the details of the evidence gathered by police commissioner, M.N. Singh, former joint commissioner (crime), Bhujangrao Mohite, deputy commissioner (crime), Pradeep Sawant, and the junior crime branch officials who recently visited the U.S. UK and Australia in connection with the

Mohammed Afroze case. The team ostensibly had been charting the international ramifications of the case.

Mr Bhangale also asked the Mumbai police to make up its mind on whether to book alleged Al Qaida operative, Mohammed Afroze (26), under the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (Poto) or the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) and file a chargesheet accordingly by April 9.

On Tuesday, the prosecution had sought the court's permission to drop the Poto case against Afroze. On Wednesday, special public prosecutor Ujwal Nikam told the court that the state had taken the decision since it did not have sufficient evidence to book

Afroze under Poto "at this stage". However, he indicated that it may use Poto against Afroze later if it unearths adequate evidence against him.

The court took a serious note of the fact that assistant commissioner of police (crime) Ramakant Padval and inspector D.T. Patil, who are investigating officers in the case, had not brought to court the case dairy

detailing the investigation. The court has ordered the police to present details of the investigation and also file a chargesheet by April 9. Until then, the court remanded Afroze to judicial custody.

Mr Nikam claimed that the police had sufficient evidence

against Afroze (who has been accused of sedition) for proving the charges of waging a war against countries friendly with India and conspiring to undertake terrorist activities in foreign countries. "We have also put him through a polygraph (lie-detector) test which has confirmed that he was not lying when he confessed to being part of the Al Qaida terrorist group," he stated.

► 'Afroze was part of Al Qaida hit squad', Page 3

Bail plea with a twist

Times News Network

MUMBAI: Mohammed Afroze, the alleged Al Qaida agent, who had consistently refused to defend himself, hired a lawyer, V.G. Pradhan, to plead for him to be released on bail on Wednesday. However, before Mr Pradhan could proceed any further, Afroze intervened and said, "Excuse me, sir...but I do not want bail."

► Detailed report on Page 3

1998 APR 10 11 40 AM

Malik to be quizzed on hawala, in custody till Apr 1

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, MARCH 26

JAMMU Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) chief and senior Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik, who was arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (POTO) in Srinagar yesterday, was today remanded to police custody for seven days by Udhampur Chief Judicial Magistrate H.K. Hanjura.

Malik, arrested following the seizure of 1 lakh US dollars being smuggled into the state from Nepal by two persons, including a girl, was brought to Udhampur under tight security last night. The boy and the girl, Mushtaq Ahmed Dar and Shazia, both residents of Batmaloo and arrested under POTO, were also remanded to 15 days' police custody by Udhampur Additional Deputy Commissioner on Monday.

Malik, who has denied any links with the two, was brought to the court under tight security. During the hearing, the prosecution requested that Malik be remanded to police custody on the plea that he was required for questioning.

However, as the CJM remanded him to police custody till April 1, Malik complained of uneasiness. Apprising the judge that he was a chronic heart patient, Malik

requested that he be admitted to a hospital.

At this, the judge directed the Principal, Government Medical College, Jammu, to constitute a medical board to examine Malik and give their opinion about his health.

Thereafter, the police brought the JKLF leader to Jammu, where a board of four doctors examined him. Except for some infection in the throat, the doctors opined that he was physically fit and need not be hospitalised. They prescribed some medicines for the throat infection. After his examination by the medical board, the police took Malik to the Joint Interrogation Centre, Jammu.

Meanwhile, police sources said that Mushtaq Ahmed Dar and Shazia, who were brought to the JIC yesterday, had reportedly confessed their involvement in a number of hawala deals between some Hurriyat leaders and their associates across the border. Mushtaq reportedly admitted that he was smuggling in hawala money and the heightened vigil along the borders had compelled him to resort to using the Nepal route this time.

Sources said Mushtaq had met Malik at the latter's party headquarters before leaving for Nepal. Malik, however, denies having ever met Mushtaq since his release from jail by police three years ago.



Shazia Begum and Mushtaq Ahmad sit under police guard in Jammu on Tuesday. Police said Begum was carrying \$1,00,000 in cash that she said was meant for JKLF leader Yasin Malik. Reuters photo

Hygam firing victims reject probe report calling it 'unjustified'

IMTIYAZ BAKHSHI
SRINAGAR, MARCH 26

VICTIMS OF the Hygam troops' firing today rejected the O.P. Sharma Commission Report into the incident that gave the security forces a clean chit. They said the report was "unjustified" and demanded a fresh probe into the incident.

The government had set up a one-man commission to probe the Hygam Army firing on a protesting crowd on February 15, 2001, in which four persons were killed and dozens injured. Talking to mediapersons here, the victims, who have come together under the banner of the Public Commission on Human Rights, termed the Justice Sharma report "in contravention to the testimony by all witnesses in the case".

"Though all witnesses from the village, as also four police officials, had testified to the Commission that no shot was fired from the crowd to provoke firing from the security forces, the report is based purely on the security force's version that sensing physical danger, the jawans had to open fire," said Mohammad Ashraf Parray, who accompanied the victims to a press conference. Parray, who as Anqaf president of the village, had asked villagers to cooperate with the Commission, said he was utterly dejected with the "biased report that nullified all eyewitness accounts". "We have lost faith in governmental inquiries. We demand that a judge of Kashmir's origin, who understands the ground situation, rescrutinise the testimony by witnesses to render justice," said Shah

'RESISTANCE POLITICALLY MOTIVATED'

POTO in the nation's interest: Vajpayee

By Our Correspondent

SHIMLA, MARCH 25. In a last-ditch effort to persuade the Opposition, especially the Congress, to give up the "politically motivated" resistance to the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance Bill, the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, said today such a law was in the nation's vital interest.

Mr. Vajpayee told newspapermen here that the Congress, being a national party, had considerable experience fighting cross-border terrorism, and had even brought in the TADA. The BJP, which was then in the Opposition, supported it wholeheartedly because it was convinced that such a law was in the nation's interest. He said he was truly dismayed by the shortsighted and narrow outlook of the Congress leadership on the POTO issue.

The Prime Minister said the Government had already dispelled all misgivings that POTO would be used selectively. The prolonged national debate on this issue had raised public awareness so high that it would not be possible for any Government at the Centre or in the States to misuse it for partisan considerations.

Mr. Vajpayee admitted that the Congress had not been taken into confidence before POTO was introduced. That, he said, had been made an issue. Terming POTO a weapon to fight terrorism, he said the Congress should accept it now.

On the issue of the Trinamool Congress, a constituent of the NDA, deciding not to support POTO, he said the party activists

might be fearing action under the same law against them by the West Bengal Government. Mr. Vajpayee said the Congress had Governments in 11 States, and hence it was all the more reason why the party should support POTO.

A wrong message would go to the world if all the parties were not united on this issue of eradicating terrorism by passing POTO, he said.

Rehabilitation in Gujarat

On the situation in Gujarat, Mr. Vajpayee said a concerted effort was on by the State Government, all political parties, voluntary and community-based groups to start an effective programme for the social and economic rehabilitation of the victims of the recent communal violence. He said Gujarat had an exemplary tradition of social work — by Gandhian organisations, religious bodies, NGOs and even business groups — without consideration of caste and creed.

The Prime Minister, who will be visiting Gujarat to take stock of the situation, appealed to all groups to take up rehabilitation work.

Asked whether the Gujarat Chief Minister, Narendra Modi, would be replaced, now that the National Human Rights Commission had criticised him for the incidents in the State, Mr. Vajpayee said, "We are waiting for the full and final report".

Nuclear war ruled out

PTI, UNI report:

Mr. Vajpayee allayed fears that the current Indo-Pak. tension could trigger a nuclear con-

flict, but asserted that the country was prepared for any eventuality and ruled out the immediate withdrawal of troops from the border.

"There is no possibility or threat of a nuclear war. India had already declared that it would not be the first to use nuclear weapons and Pakistan has also expressed similar views. I do not see any threat of a nuclear war," he said.

Asked whether he saw the possibility of outbreak of a war in view of the prevailing border tension, he said the country was prepared for any eventuality.

On the withdrawal of troops from the border, Mr. Vajpayee said, "There is no such proposal at present" and recalled that the decision to deploy forces was taken by a high level committee which included representatives from the three services.

About a resumption of the stalled dialogue with Pakistan, the Prime Minister said, "We will talk only when a conducive atmosphere is created. Everyday violence and clashes are taking place. Jawans are being killed and civilians are being targeted."

Asked whether the Government would seek any amendment to the Constitution to find a solution to the vexed Ayodhya issue in the wake of such a demand by the VHP, Mr. Vajpayee said, "There is no need for a change in the Constitution."

Mr. Vajpayee who arrived in Shimla yesterday to attend a public rally to mark four years of Bharatiya Janata Party- Himachal Vikas Congress rule in Himachal Pradesh, left for New Delhi later today.

THE HINDU

20 MAR 2002

Yaseen Malik held under POTO

By Shujaat Bukhari

26/3
410-1

SRINAGAR, MARCH 26. Amid high drama at the headquarters of the All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC), police today arrested its senior leader and JKLF chairman, Yaseen Malik, while he was addressing a press conference denying his "involvement" with two persons arrested on Sunday with \$1 lakh in their possession.

Mr. Malik has been arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (POTO). Police later used teargas shells to disperse people who protested against the arrest.

Even as Mr. Malik was addressing the press conference, a police party led by the Station House Officer, Rajbagh, entered the conference hall and asked him to stop talking to the press. "You are under arrest," the SHO told Mr. Malik.

However, Mr. Malik said, "I will first talk to them and then come with you." This led to a verbal duel, with Mr. Malik's supporters raising slogans such as "We want freedom" and "Police hai hai". The JKLF vice chairman, Javed Mir, and other activists did not allow the police to take Mr. Malik away and he continued his address to the presspersons.

Condemning the Government for "highhandedness", Mr. Malik said it was frustrated with the organisation's announcement of constituting an elec-

tion commission to prove its representative character. "We have rejected the Government's election proposal, that is why they are perturbed and have been trying to find an excuse to implicate me in false cases."

Denying his involvement with Shazia Begum and Mush-taq Ahmed Dar, who were arrested on Sunday near Udhampur — police said they were carrying \$1 lakh and Rs. 18,000 to be delivered to Mr. Malik through hawala channels — Mr. Malik said, "If it is proved that Shazia Begum has seen me, let alone talked to me, I will quit the movement and am ready for any punishment." He also denied that the Pakistan-based spokesman of the JKLF, Altaf Qadri, who was reported to have handed over the money to Shazia Begum in Kathmandu, had been to Nepal in the last seven years. "I challenge Mr. Suri (the State DGP) to prove the allegations," he said.

Mr. Malik also refuted the allegation that Dar was the JKLF spokesman. "I have been inactive for the last one-and-a-half years and was operated thrice in the U.S. So the Government had no ground to arrest me."

However, before Mr. Malik could complete his submissions, another police party led by a Deputy Superintendent of Police stormed the office and asked him to stop. Again, a scene was created, with Mr. Malik's supporters objecting to the

police action. Mr. Malik was later dragged by the policemen and bundled into a waiting vehicle. As the vehicle sped away, Hurriyat activists shouted slogans and threw stones at the police, who burst teargas shells.

Order was later restored in the area. But in the Maisuma locality of the city, where Mr. Malik lives, the news was received with panic.

Angry youth took to the streets and started throwing stones. Police resorted to a lathicharge and burst dozens of teargas shells. Shops were closed and pitched battles between police and the mob took place.

The Inspector General of Police, Kashmir zone, K. Rajindra, told *The Hindu* that Mr. Malik had been arrested under POTO and the Foreign Exchange Movement Act (FEMA). A case had been registered and Mr. Malik was being handed over to the Udhampur police. The IGP, Jammu zone, Pitamber Lal Gupta, said that both Shazia and Dar had been shifted to the Joint Interrogation Centre in Jammu.

UNI reports:

Police also raided the office and house of Mr. Malik and seized his passport and office records. A JKLF spokesman said that the organisation had given a call for a general strike on Wednesday to protest the arrest of Mr. Malik. The APHC has also condemned the arrest.

376 2 100

26 MAR 2002

Insecure citizens within secure borders

By V.R. Raghavan

HP-10 15/3

India's borders are secure from invasion. However, the citizen's well-being is seriously undermined by social and political violence.

THE SPECTACLE of India's defence forces lined up on the borders with Pakistan, even as its citizens are being torched within the country is a tragic paradox. As the decidedly stronger military and economic power in the region, India is not under threat of military invasion or defeat from any of its neighbours. Its military strength clearly rules out the possibility of any of the neighbouring countries obtaining a decisive outcome against India in a war. India's borders are secure from invasion. However, the citizen's well-being is seriously undermined by social and political violence. The much-vaunted power of the state is then seen to be incapable of defending the citizen or protecting his well-being. That Indian citizens are insecure behind secure borders is a phenomenon that mocks the power of the state. It is also an indictment of the strategic understanding of its political leadership.

The relationship between national security and ethno-religious conflicts has rarely been understood by India's leadership. Not long after Independence, the response of the Indian state to the demands of the people of the Northeast was primarily military. That set the response pattern to all demands for better governance or transparent political processes. In Jammu and Kashmir, the meddling with the electoral process had as much to do with the widespread alienation of the people as the cross-border activities from Pakistan. In the management of electoral processes in the rest of India, recourse to political agendas which divide rather than unite the polity has been the dominant political theme.

In contrast with the policy of dividing the population on religious and ethnic lines, Governments have always portrayed themselves as defenders of the nation. This trend is common to all political parties which have ruled from New Delhi. The security outlook of Indian Governments has, therefore, not

unexpectedly, contained a strong element of defending the state. The defence of the nation's territory thus became the dominant security discourse. This discourse in turn led to a focus on the military dimension of security, creating in its turn a strong military capability. The narrow focus on security in its military terms was also sustained by the military conflicts imposed on India by China and Pakistan. This territorial security outlook, however, ensured that the deeper underpinnings of national security were neither understood nor allowed to emerge. The ability to look beyond military hardware, to the well-being of the citizens as a national security requirement, never really gained strength.

The confidence in the military capability to defend national territory, emboldened India's political leadership to erode the essentials of the Indian nation. If the state is to guard the nation, it must essentially protect and defend its national values. National security is understood to be the length to which the state would go, even by waging war, to defend national values. That the essential Indian core value of secularism was seriously being eroded over decades by Governments at the Centre and in the States is not in doubt. It is also proof of political parties placing a premium on electoral considerations, rather than on national security. That misguided groups and political elements will attempt to act in a manner dangerous to national security is to be expected. The state on the other hand, is expected to protect its citizens from such elements, and if necessary apply its coercive powers in doing so. The 1984 killings of Sikhs and the Gujarat killings in recent weeks are a negation of the state's role in ensuring national security. Ruling parties have allowed

the state to become a tool in the hands of those threatening national security. National security is also measured by respect its people have around the world. It is measured by the stability of economic and social structures and the commitment of the political leadership to keep peace within the country. A leadership that is unconcerned about this wider meaning of national security is ignorant of strategic considerations and, worse still, an enemy of the nation's interests.

The real meaning of the terrorist attacks of September 9 and December 13 concerns the vulnerability of the state. These attacks prove that every state is vulnerable to such threats. Such attacks do not require a military capability. Even more importantly, they cannot be met by military power alone. This conclusion has raised questions about what a state secures, and whose security it ensures, by its coercive powers. The Indian state's response to the attack on Parliament has been marked by a series of decisive actions. These have, unfortunately, been wholly in the realm of military and foreign policy. That these are insufficient to sustain the pressure on the adversary has apparently not been understood. If it had been, New Delhi would not have stood by and watched the carnage in Gujarat. It would also not have allowed the mobilisation of mob power to force the Ayodhya issue. Through Government inaction, the ability of the Indian state to argue its national security case has been constrained in more ways than one. It is often stated by the Indian political leadership that Pakistan is out to break up the Indian nation, by supporting insurgencies and insurrections. The truth of that, at least as far as it related to Jammu and Kashmir, was becoming apparent to interna-

tional opinion after last year's terrorist attacks. The Indian insistence that its core values were being threatened by Pakistan's actions was beginning to find acceptance. Gujarat and Ayodhya have placed serious doubts on such assertions, if not altogether discredited them. The Indian leadership and its well-wishers will, therefore, be making an unconvincing case when they talk of threats to core values in relation to Jammu and Kashmir.

It would be charitable to believe that the Government in New Delhi, claiming a better understanding of national security than those which preceded it, did not understand the import of the Gujarat Government's failures. The failure to act, even after complicity or incompetence of the State Government is proved, confirms fears of national security being treated as secondary to the security of the ruling establishment. That those in power treat the well-being of the citizens as unrelated to national security is a revelation that will create anxieties in all segments of society. Inability of the ruling establishment to act in the national interest will lead to India's friends and foes making conclusions on the policy convictions of the Government. Above all, inability to act decisively will create doubts on the Government's decision-making processes. This Government has placed its armed forces on high alert for war. If a war does start either by miscalculation, or, due to political compulsions, its outcome in the light of the recent demonstration of indecision on national security concerns can be unpredictable indeed. The implications of this in a war situation can be catastrophic. It is time the Government demonstrates its understanding of the symbiotic relationship between social cohesion, religious tolerance, political stability and national security. Defending national core values is no less important than the defence of the state's territories. In fact, one cannot be had without the other.

THE HINDU

15 MAR 2002

Tarnished brass

5/1/99 Whither our military ethos? 9-11 08/11/99

Unconnected they might have been, yet the recent series of unsavoury affairs concerning high ranking officers of the defence services give rises to grave disquiet. One lieutenant-general stripped of command on the battlefield. Another lieutenant-general and a vice-admiral seeking premature retirement when the forces were mobilised for action. An air marshal being given marching orders for trying to pull political strings to secure an appointment of his choice. What do they point to: probable dereliction of duty, placing personal interests above those of the service, and the most despicable kind of lobbying. To conclude that they do not really add up would be over-simplistic. The sum total is a drastic assault on all that our armed forces are reputed to be — men of honour, dedication, and exemplary standards of professional and personal conduct. It would be grossly unfair to paint all defence officers with the same brush, there would be innumerable instances of our men in uniform upholding traditions which have set them apart, but these sad instances cannot be written off as aberrations. Not against the background of attempts to have appointments reversed in courts of law, spy-cams recording how some officers have tried to swing purchases. It would be even more dangerous to take the line that this sort of thing has a long history, only now has it come into public view. Nor would there be a vestige of acceptability to the argument that the armed forces cannot be isolated from the rest of a degenerate society. That would be akin to throwing in the towel.

Serving the Indian army — in the larger sense of the term — had been hailed as a matter of honour simply because its sinews and strengths were forged by a set of values. Officers commanded not by the powers vested in them by the manuals but by sheer personal qualities. Their men had complete faith and trust in them, they would follow them into the jaws of death. It was moral authority at its most noble. It is that brand of authority that has to be restored. Just imagine what the youngsters who attained rare heights during the Kargil war would feel when they learn how their superiors have functioned.

A feeling of having been let-down would be putting it mildly, betrayal might be a more apt description. We are fortunate that the three current Chiefs of Staff are outstanding officers and gentlemen, and that in George Fernandes we have a minister whose heart is certainly in the right place. They must now join forces to restore the value-system, rid the forces of sycophancy, ensure that no political influences impact on promotions, appointments and so on. Getting rid of one rotten egg is not enough. If a purge is required there can be no backing off, and opposition parties would do well to refrain from seeking mere political advantage. A crisis of character is looming large, there can be no ducking it. Cleansing the forces and restoring a genuine sense of pride in the uniform will be a long, hard haul. The operation has to be launched without delay. Cariappa once described the Indian jawan as "the salt of the earth", it is tragic that we now have to ask if his officers are worthy of him?

THE STATESMAN

15 MAR 2002

Fernandes back to China-bashing

Fernandes
H.E. 7
10/3
HT Correspondent
New Delhi, March 9

DEFENCE MINISTER George Fernandes returned to his pet peeve, China, on Saturday, urging that India's Defence spending be doubled to balance the China factor.

Speaking at the Navy Foundation's seminar on Indian Security here, Fernandes expressed doubts on the genuineness of the Chinese disclosure of their defence spending.

"China's (declared) annual defence budget is \$ 20 billion. Ours

is about \$ 14 billion. But when we compare the two countries, we overlook the fact that the strength of the Chinese defence forces is two to three times that of India's. (Logically) Their budget should have been at least twice of \$ 20 billion," he argued.

The Chinese economic situation, the Minister observed, was far better than India's. "Three decades ago, we were ahead of China. Today, it has left us far behind. Powered by a growth rate of 9 per cent over the past 20 years, China's GDP is \$ 1.1 trillion. We're yet to touch \$ 500 bil-

lion," he said.

Fernandes pointed out that there were great celebrations when India's foreign exchange reserves touched the \$ 50 billion mark. "On his visit to India recently, the Chinese Prime Minister told us that China's forex reserves were more than 216 billion. While their global trade has crossed \$ 516 billion, we're still stuck at \$ 70 billion. Ultimately, it is economic strength that will decide our military strength," the Minister said, referring to China's 17 per cent increase in its Defence budget this month.

India has increased its Defence spending by 14 per cent over the amount spent last year, which was Rs 5,000 crore less than the budgeted amount.

India's defence expenses needs to be "doubled" if it wants to be an effective and modern military force, he advised. China's military muscle was enabled by its strong economic showing. "It's growth is related to the discipline of the Chinese working class and the nation as a whole. We seem to lack that discipline and most of that reflects in our work culture," he said.

(THE HINDUSTAN TIMES)

10/3

Decks cleared for Defence chief post

New Delhi, March 4

DECKS WERE today cleared for naming the country's first-ever Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), with the Government filling up all key posts for the new Integrated Defence Staff. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Army chief, Gen Padmanabhan, is a clear favourite for the top post.

The Air Force has announced that Air Marshal G C S Rajawar has taken over as the Deputy Chief of Integrated Staff (DCIDS) to look after the future joint training of three services, organisational planning and framing of a common war doctrine.

Simultaneously the setting up of the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), a major recommendation of the group of ministers which went into Kargil intrusion, also become operational today. Lt Gen Kamal

Davar took over as its first Director General.

Davar would concurrently be the Deputy Chief of the Integrated Defence Staff from the Army. Before assuming his new appointment, Davar was the Director General of the Mechanised Forces.

Vice Admiral S C S Bangara has been appointed as the third Deputy Chief of the Integrated Staff and would be in charge of operational integration of the three services.

Three more senior air commodores J S Gujral, M Dixit and S L Sud on promotion to the rank of air vice marshals have been posted to Integrated Defence Staff to form the nucleus of joint operations command, perspective planning and force structures.

Another IAF officer Air Vice Marshal S C Malhan has been appointed as Deputy Director General Dia as well as Assistant

Chief of Integrated Staff (Intelligence).

Though the Government announcement on filling up the structure of the integrated staff did not spell it out, the major portion of the Directorate General of military intelligence as well as naval and air force intelligence would now be moved to the new Defence Intelligence Agency.

The Government also has to announce the formation of the strategic command controlling the country's nuclear weapons and assets. The post is most likely to go to the Air Force.

In other appointments, Air Vice Marshal B N Gokhale has taken over the key post of Assistant Chief of Air Staff at Air headquarters here, while another Air Vice Marshal P K Mehra has taken over as the Air Defence Commander of the South Western Air Command.

PTI

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DEFENDS TAXATION / MOVE TO BALANCE SLOWDOWN

I expect demand revival from rural sector: Sinha

HD-13
2/3

9-
D B N Sumbh

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 1. The Union Finance Minister, Yashwant Sinha, today defended his taxation proposals in the budget and said that he had made a compromise to balance fiscal rectitude and economic slowdown. "We settled for a compromise and we know a compromise does not satisfy anybody," Mr. Sinha told a post-budget meeting organised by the FICCI here today.

He was responding to queries as to how he envisaged a demand revival when he had imposed additional taxation burdens on the general population. Since there was going to be a revenue shortfall of Rs. 20,000 crores in the current fiscal, he said he could not repeat last year's performance of tax give-aways of nearly Rs. 16,000 to Rs. 17,000 crores. "I was persuaded last year that the give-aways will generate demand and we will get revenue. That did not happen. Still, there is some revenue give-away in the latest budget too," he added.

The Finance Minister explained that he expected demand to be generated from the rural sector which had received

much attention in the budget. "We all know rural demand leads to industrial demand. That is where I expect the demand revival to generate." The second area which would lead to a demand pick-up was the expected improvement in the global economy. "Once the global economy picks up, our export demand would increase."

Mr. Sinha explained that he could have presented a "pleasant" budget this year too, "but the feel-good factor would have disappeared even faster than last year."

'Even my wife doesn't like it'

NEW DELHI, MARCH 1. Even the Finance Minister, Yashwant Sinha's wife is perturbed over the budget proposal seeking reduction of the subsidy on LPG thereby raising its price by Rs. 40 a cylinder.

"My wife is not happy over the increase in the cooking gas price. I had to convince her about the logic behind the move," Mr. Sinha told presspersons after participating in a seminar here. _ UNI

Taking on the industry's point about lack of announcements pertaining to investment allowance, withdrawal of minimum alternate tax and some excise concessions, he said there was no investment allowance in the mid-1990s and yet there was a spurt in investment. "Sometimes, we look for solutions that are too simplistic and they fail to deliver."

Mr. Sinha explained that conceding the demand for investment allowance would have meant a revenue loss of around Rs. 7,000 crores, the reduction in corporation tax to 30 per cent would have meant another revenue loss of Rs. 5,000 crores and each point of reduction costs Rs. 5,000 crores.

Instead, he said the budget contains a lot of sector packages such as those for textiles, steel and tourism which would generate employment and demand when these sectors pick up. The textile industry was in the doldrums and competition was likely to hot up once the multi-fibre arrangement ended in 2004. Similarly, he referred to the package for the development of urban centres since they could be engines of growth which they had ceased to be as of now.

THE HINDU

- 2 MAR 2002

Surcharge, N-fund veil over defence hike

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Feb. 28: The Centre has disguised its hike in military expenditure by keeping the rise in the defence budget at a modest Rs 3,000 crore — a meagre 4.8 per cent higher than last year's estimate of Rs 62,000 crore.

The real expenditure on defence is expected to go up by 14 per cent and more. This does not take into account all the funds earmarked for nuclear weaponisation.

In addition, the fund created by levying the national security surcharge of 5 per cent on all tax

payers will invariably be used to meet defence expenses for internal security.

As usual, the defence budget is the most opaque of fiscal documents and evades detailing military expenditure on specific heads. Finance minister Yashwant Sinha also told the House that should the need arise, there will be no dearth of funds for the armed forces.

Defence minister George Fernandes, worried till this month because funds under capital expenditure were being returned unspent, said he was satisfied with the allocations.

The defence ministry had

mooted the idea of a fund created out of the money unspent on acquisitions in previous years. But budgetary rules have not been amended to accommodate the request. The capital outlay for defence has been hiked to Rs 21,410.63 crore from Rs 19,950 crore in last year's budget estimates.

The cost of putting the forces under high alert under Operation Parakram has not been shown under a separate head. But Sinha said it took nearly Rs 400 crore to maintain the troops on the border for a month.

Apart from this, the revised estimates for 2001-2002 show

that expenses under transportation, works and special allowances have gone up substantially even though the total budget for the current year was pared down by Rs 5,000 crore to Rs 57,000 crore.

"Basically, this shows that even the 'new' procurement processes that are said to have been put in place after Kargil are not nimble and responsive enough," said analyst Commodore Uday Bhaskar, deputy director of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis.

"The time has now come to look at our threat profile and acquire capabilities that

are commensurate with it," he said. The defence ministry recovered remarkably well after reeling under the impact of the Teheika sting operations and subsequent charges from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) which made decision-making tardy.

According to the revised estimates, the ministry has surrendered an unspent Rs 5,000 crore, paring down the defence budget for 2001-2002 to Rs 57,000 crore.

Fernandes had said that in the first five months of the year, barely 15-20 per cent of the bud-

get was spent. Even in January, an estimated Rs 12,000 crore of the capital allocation of Rs 19,950 crore was unspent. Ministry sources said contracts signed with the Russians have taken up the bulk of the expenses. These include about Rs 1,000 crore for Krasnopol ammunition and money for the supply of T-90 tanks that are replenishing the armoured units.

In 2002-2003, the allocation for the army totals Rs 38,810.15 crore of which Rs 7,384.8 crore is for capital expenditure, meaning purchase of new equipment. The navy gets Rs 7,092.05 crore of

which Rs 2,443.94 is for capital expenses. Apart from this, Rs 2,473.79 crore has been shown under the head "naval fleet" and Rs 400.57 crore under "naval dockyards". The air force gets Rs 15,827.25 crore of which Rs 7,402.17 crore is for capital expenditure.

While the revenue expenditure for the army has gone down by about Rs 500 crore, that for the air force and the navy has increased by about Rs 450 crore and Rs 600 crore, respectively. The hike for "aircraft and aero engines" in the capital expenses for the air force alone is Rs 2,400 crore.

THE TELEGRAPH

1 MAR 2002

J. D. N. Lewis

POTO tabled in Lok Sabha

By Our Special Correspondent

26/2
NEW DELHI, FEB. 25. The Government today tabled in the Lok Sabha the controversial Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance 2001 (POTO) which was re-promulgated in December last year after its introduction in the winter session was stalled by the Opposition.

The ordinance was tabled by the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Santosh Gangwar, along with three other ordinances when the House assembled after the President, K.R. Narayanan's address to the joint sitting of Parliament.

As the House was about to be adjourned, the Congress chief whip, Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi, observed that the Government was still pursuing POTO despite the four States — which went to the polls recently — voting against it.

Later, indicating that the Congress would continue to oppose POTO, the party spokesman, Jaipal Reddy, said the Government should review its position on the ordinance. Drawing attention to the fact that the BJP had made POTO the main theme of its election campaign, Mr. Reddy said the results showed that "POTO as a piece of legislation has not been favoured by the people at all".

THE HINDU

26 FEB 2002

India seeks details on Sheikh Omar's role

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, FEB. 19. India today sought information from Pakistan on the hijack of the Indian Airlines plane in 1999 and the attack on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly in October and also on Parliament in December last following the on-going interrogation of Sheikh Omar Saeed in Karachi.

India conveyed its "request" for "cooperation" to Pakistan's Deputy High Commissioner, Jallil Abbas Jilani, who was summoned by the Joint Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Arun Singh.

According to the MEA spokesperson, Nirupama Rao, India's assessment, as well as media reports from Pakistan, suggested Sheikh Omar's involvement in the hijack and the attacks on the Indian democratic institutions. Sheikh Omar was released in return for the hijacked passengers of the IA plane, IC-814, which was hijacked en route from Kathmandu to Kandahar.

Government sources said that Sheikh Omar's possible involvement in the attack on the World

Trade Center, in the U.S., on September 11 was under scrutiny. It is alleged that Aftab Ansari, who has been deported to India from Dubai for his complicity in the shooting incident outside the American Center in Kolkata, may have transferred money to Sheikh Omar. These funds, it is suspected, may have been sent to Mohammad Atta, prime suspect in the WTC attack.

"The Government of Pakistan has been requested to provide relevant information," the spokesperson said.

India has a strong case for seeking Pakistan's cooperation under the U.N. Security Council Resolution 1373, which demands that all countries elim-

inate terrorism from their territory. Sheikh Omar's presence in a terrorist training camp in Kandahar and his recent exit from Afghanistan to Pakistan add to his terrorist antecedents.

According to the spokesperson, international law and widespread consensus mandate two things. First, it entails all countries to provide assistance related to criminal investigations or proceedings related to terrorism. Second, it calls upon nations to obtain and share evidence that may be in their possession.

She clarified that India was not seeking Sheikh Omar's extradition and only looking for meaningful action by Pakistan.

CBI raids hawala dealers

NEW DELHI, FEB. 19. The CBI today carried out raids on the premises of three hawala dealers, allegedly involved in providing funds to bring in the arms consignment of Aftab Ansari, official sources said here tonight.

They said that the special investigating unit of the CBI began raids at three places in the walled city area after Ansari revealed the role of the dealers in supplying money to his henchman, Aqib, already arrested in the arms seizure case in Gujarat. However, no arrests had been made. — PTI

'No pullback till Pak. fulfils conditions'

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, FEB. 19. Maintaining that troop morale was high, the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, today ruled out a pullback from the Indo-Pak. borders till Islamabad fulfilled the conditions spelt out by New Delhi.

"The troops were moved to the border in a certain situation and we had laid down some conditions which were not fulfilled. They will remain there till these are fulfilled and a final decision is taken by the Government," he said here.

Dispelling apprehensions of fatigue or loss of morale among the troops, Mr. Fernandes said "they are very fine men. You can't beat them." He had inspected the forward positions and found that the morale of the troops was unaffected by their prolonged deployment. "I had a wide interaction with the troops and the nation should rest assured that their morale is on top. The only question they ask is how long do you want us to wait to handle the enemy."

Mr. Fernandes said additional costs in maintaining the stand-off with Pakistan were not prohibitive. "Moving troops to forward positions and getting them back does cost a lot. But there is hardly any additional expenditure in deploying them on the border." The Government would unhesitatingly sanction additional funds for the defence sector if necessary. "As far as the defence sector is concerned, the position of the Government is that it will never be starved of funds."

In a significant observation, Mr. Fernandes expressed his misgivings over the discussion of defence purchases in the public domain.

As a result, policy-makers were not prepared to take crucial purchase decisions. On the



The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, rests his hand on a tripod-mounted machine gun while talking to presspersons during 'Defexpo India 2002' in New Delhi on Tuesday. — Reuters

lingering decision on the purchase of advanced jet trainers (AJTs), Mr. Fernandes was critical of those who were sabotaging a final decision. "Unfortunately, far too many people are getting involved. It has not moved a step forward but there are a lot of people who wouldn't care less," he said without naming anyone. On the casket controversy, the Minister declined to discuss the issue publicly and termed recent reports on it as "lies, more lies and super lies."

Supporting public sector ordinance factories, he said it was unfair to criticise them on grounds of quality. The factories had risen to the occasion by op-

erating round-the-clock to supply ammunition during the Kargil War. The quality of their products was good, which was evident from the interest shown by some countries. "We should not denigrate what is ours," he counselled.

Mr. Fernandes was positive about the future course of Indo-U.S. ties and said a road-map for closer ties between the two militaries had been worked out. American objections to transferring high-tech military equipment had also ebbed. "In the past one year, their stand-offishness gradually went away. A different relationship has emerged after September 11."

THE HINDU

20 FEB 2002

Target India, says Omar

Terror mastermind talks of role in J&K, Kolkata strikes

Islamabad, February 18

SHEIKH OMAR Saeed, prime accused in US journalist Daniel Pearl's kidnapping, has reportedly revealed his role in the suicide attacks on the Indian Parliament, Jammu and Kashmir Assembly and the American Center in Kolkata. He has also admitted to close links with Osama bin Laden and Aftab Ansari, whom he "cultivated" during his stay in Tihar Jail.

The News, an English-language daily, reported Omar's confession. A senior leader of the banned Jaish-e-Mohammad, British-born Omar was one of the three terrorists whom New Delhi was forced to free in 1999 in exchange for the hostages in the Indian Airlines plane hijacked to Kandahar. He is now in the custody of Pakistani police.

The attacks, according to him, were aimed at provoking Indian leaders to take hardline action against Pakistan, which in turn could have forced Presi-

Burger link to Pearl case

MANSUR HASNAIN, named a prime suspect in the kidnapping of *Wall Street* journalist Daniel Pearl, was Sunny Ahmed Qazi alias "Burger", who was involved in the hijacking of IA flight IC-814 in 1999, Intelligence agencies said on Monday. Pakistani reports on Friday spoke of the police having identified Hasnain alias "Hyder" alias Imtiaz Siddiqi, architect of the hijacking of the IA plane from Kathmandu to Kandahar, as the main suspect who plotted the kidnapping of Pearl.

PTI, New Delhi



COUGHING UP CONFESSIONS

For a diehard jihadi, the prime accused in Daniel Pearl's abduction has shown surprising candour about his role in anti-India operations.

J&K ASSEMBLY (SRINAGAR, October 1, 2001)

Sheikh says the terrorist who detonated the car bomb outside the J&K Assembly in Srinagar was a Pakistani suicide bomber. The Jaish-e-Mohammad had claimed responsibility.



PARLIAMENT (NEW DELHI, December 11, 2001)

Sheikh offers to reveal the "real identities" of the terrorists who tried to storm Parliament. Says the aim was to take Indian MPs hostage and to seek the release of all Kashmiri militants.



AMERICAN CENTER (KOLKATA, January 22, 2002)

Was in constant touch with Aftab Ansari, the jihadi criminal, a few days before the Kolkata attack. Claims he "cultivated" Ansari, while both of them were in Tihar Jail in the mid-1990s.



dent Pervez Musharraf to soften his stand against the Pakistan-based jihadi groups, the daily quoting officials said.

Omar provided the police with details about his connections and relationship with Aftab Ansari, the chief suspect in the Kolkata shooting, the daily said. He offered to reveal the real identities of Kashmiri militants who stormed Parliament and admitted the aim of the attack was to take Indian MPs hostage and seek the release of all Kashmiri militants.

The News quoted police officers as saying that Omar had

under-cover ties with Arab associates of Osama bin Laden. Several independent reports and interrogation of two other suspects in the Pearl kidnapping case have confirmed Omar's strong connections to the Taliban and his status as a guerrilla warfare instructor in one of the key training facilities in Afghanistan, they said.

Sheikh said the militant who exploded the car bomb outside the J&K Assembly on October 1 last year was a Pakistani suicide bomber, the daily reported.

He said he was in touch with

Ansari a few days before the attack on the American Center in Kolkata and claimed he had "cultivated" Ansari in Tihar prison in New Delhi in the mid-1990s.

Sheikh identified fellow Jaish leader Mansur Hasnain alias Hyder, one of the hijackers of the IA plane from Kathmandu, as the kingpin behind Pearl's kidnapping, the daily reported.

He told police he believed that Pearl was shot by his captors while escaping from a Karachi safe house a few days after the kidnapping on January 23.

PTI

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

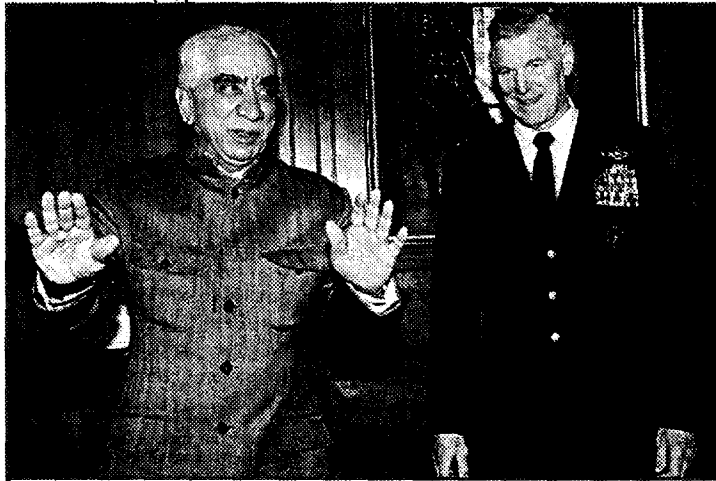
Purchase of US firefinders cleared

Our Political Bureau
NEW DELHI 18 FEBRUARY

INDIA WILL begin its military acquisition account with the US with the purchase of 200 AN/TPQ-37 weapons-locating radars ("firefinders") and GE-404 engines for the LCA that will not only help in capacity building of the defence forces but boost the Army's fight against terrorism.

This was revealed during a visit by General Richard B. Myers, chairman, US joint chiefs of staff, though he was careful to tag on the rider that the US would not act in the Kashmir dispute. Talking to reporters on Monday, General Myers said: "In terms of Indo-Pak issues, these will be worked out by India and Pakistan." The radar deal will be finalised by a US army team due to visit New Delhi next week.

In April, India and the US will, for the first time, exchange their



DOUBLE IMPACT: Foreign minister Jaswant Singh and Richard Myers, chairman of the US joint chiefs of staff, ahead of their meeting in New Delhi on Monday — AP

net assessments on the security situation in the region and the world. This'll see the first interaction

between Pentagon defence guru Andrew Marshall and the Indian side, to be led by General Joshi.

In a statement, the government said: "This agreement will be, for the Army, the first major government-to-government purchase of military equipment from the US Agreements for other equipment are expected to follow." India's interest in purchasing high-tech defence equipment from the US has been a result of the US relaxing its defence and technology-related sanctions against India.

General Myers, on Monday, confirmed that although his visit was aimed at maintaining the momentum on military-to-military relations, a spin-off of this accelerated interaction will definitely affect the war against terrorism.

General Myers also met his counterpart, General S. Padmanabhan, chairman, chiefs of staff committee, defence secretary Yogendra Narain, national security adviser Brajesh Mishra and foreign minister Jaswant Singh.

The Economic Times

The Siliguri Corridor threatened

By Vinay Kumar

NEW DELHI, FEB. 17. The Siliguri Corridor, a narrow strip of land also called the eastern chicken's neck, which has several vital installations around it and connects the mainland with the outlying border States of the Northeast, has come in handy for clandestine activities of ISI agents and saboteurs. It faces threat from the pattern of free movement of personnel and goods through the border areas.

Several militant organisations including the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) have been using the corridor for their movement for a long time. The recent emergence of another insurgent outfit, the Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (KLO) in North Bengal, is adding to the worries of security forces.

"Of late, the KLO and the ULFA have started an extortion drive targeting local tea gardens. They are most active in Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri and Siliguri subdivisions of Darjeeling," cautions the latest volume of *Faultlines*, a quarterly publication edited by K.P.S. Gill and Ajai Sahni.

ULFA cadre has been using North Bengal as a transit point to go from Bhutan to Bangladesh and vice versa while some

militants have also crossed over to Nepal through this area, says Pinaki Bhattacharya in his write-up 'The Siliguri Corridor' featuring in *Faultlines*.

Reports suggest that the ISI was supplying a large quantity of arms and ammunition to various Northeast terrorist outfits from the stockpiles of the Khmer Rouge of Cambodia after its defeat. These were picked up from the markets of Thailand and were transported to Cox's Bazaar in Bangladesh, eventually to be used on the Indian soil. The arms were shipped from Thai ports to Cox's Bazaar and were then carried on headloads for rest of the way. The recipients were NSCN(IM), ULFA and Bodo groups.

Siliguri town is a gateway to Guwahati in Assam, Gangtok in Sikkim and Kishengunj in Bihar. It also shares borders with three countries — Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal. The cosmopolitan character of the town makes it easier for outsiders to get assimilated into the local populace, and this provides perfect cover to the subversives.

Quoting intelligence sources, the writer says that Tabligh-e-Jamaat, yet another outfit, has also become active around the Siliguri Corridor. It holds regular meetings in Champasari and Bardhaman Road, and is also said to be in contact with the

Harkat-ul-Ansar in Nepal. Although the activity of the organisation is discreet, it reportedly includes anti-India propaganda and raising funds for the "Islamic cause".

Infiltration

Referring to infiltration into India, Mr. Bhattacharya says that Bangladeshis have hit upon a novel way of 'legalising' their immigration. The relatives who are in India reportedly get the names of those across the border included in the voters' list during enumeration. As their names finally appear in the list, messages are then sent across to them to cross over. It is this population that reportedly creates a buffer of non-combatants for the militants who use them as a perfect cover.

Analysts also perceive eastern Nepal, bordering the Siliguri corridor, to be the springboard for Pakistan-sponsored insurgency in the Northeast. Nepal's proximity to this passage assumes significance because of its strategic importance. Bound by Nepal and Bangladesh in the south, the use of this passage for transferring small arms and contraband from both the countries is now well-established. Yakoob Memon, one of the accused in the 1993 Mumbai blast case, was traced in Nepal, and the IC-814 Indian Airlines flight was hijacked from Katmandu.

THE HINDU

18 FEB 2002

Aftab reveals links with ISI top guns

Pakistani agency funded Ansari's
empire comprising 14 companies

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, February 11

AFTAB AHMED Ansari, deported by the UAE on Saturday, has admitted meeting senior ISI officials in Dubai and Rawalpindi on at least five occasions since 1999. A substantial part of his murky empire, composed of about 14 companies, is suspected to have been built with ISI funding and assistance.

Ansari told interrogators today that ISI operatives contacted him a few months after he jumped bail in India in 1999 and escaped to Pakistan. "They used to meet me under assumed names at designated places," he said.

The Kolkata attack mastermind named seven ISI officers he had met. Three of them, he claimed, were Brigadiers in the Pakistan Army. The RAW, the IB and the DRI are now verifying the authenticity of his statement.

Ansari said he had been asked to build "a network in India and await instructions". He also admitted meeting top Lashkar-e-Tayyeba activists, but denied taking part in any terrorist act. "I knew them, but have never participated in any of their operations," he said. However, he confessed to planning six abductions, two of which failed.

Though he said in the beginning that he had procured his

Pakistani passport (J-872142) through a Lahore tout, he admitted afterwards that Azim Chima, the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba commander, had helped him obtain it.

A three-member team of the Kolkata Police, including Detective Department chief Soumen Mitra, met CBI Joint Director Neeraj Kumar today and discussed the American Center shooting. Sources disclosed that despite Ansari's denial of any hand in the attack, the detectives have found evidence of his involvement.

"Ansari made a telephone call to Kolkata Police, and his associates who were involved in the abduction of Khadim vice-chairman Parthapratim Roy Burman, were involved in the American Center shooting as well, said a CBI officer, adding that two of them, Wasim and Abdullah, have been identified. But the officer denied that the agency would use Ansari's new-born son to extract information from him.

The CBI, which has split the probe into ten broad areas, said it has finished compiling information on Aftab's profile, his associates and his criminal network. It is sharing some of this information with the Delhi Police. "We have started profiling his jihadi connections and his involvement in terrorist activities," a senior official said.

Related reports on Page 3

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

12 FEB 2002

Ansari in, 130 fugitives still out in UAE

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Shivnath Jha in New Delhi

Feb. 11. — The celebrations over Aftab Ansari's deportation from the UAE belie the fact that the country is still host to scores of fugitives wanted by India. CBI officials said out of 471 criminals and terrorists wanted by police and other investigative agencies here, more than 130 are in Dubai and other parts of the UAE.

Some of the accused in the Mumbai blasts — including Dawood Hassan, Ayub Razak Memon, Latif Noor Mohammad, Mohammad Shafi Kasam Memon, Reshma Ayub Memon and Ayub Razak Memon — are hiding in the West Asian country. Over a dozen narcotic smugglers and criminals accused of economic fraud in India are also "taking shelter" in the UAE, senior officials said.

Moreover, according to a CBI official, "many criminals are hiding in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Myanmar and the UK".

Besides smuggling of weapons and explosives and other contrabands, these fugitives have employed many people in the coun-

try, especially in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Punjab, West Bengal, Bihar and Gujarat to follow "their orders", the official said. He said these criminals might have close links with officials from various law enforcement agencies.

The CBI official has reason to believe this. Statistics suggest that "during the past three years, the law enforcement agencies —

UP, Maharashtra and Gujarat police — failed to crack their operations and seize smuggled materials on as many as eight occasions despite having correct intelligence inputs," he said. Last November, Asif Reza Khan was arrested near Lodi Garden while he was meeting his Pakistani accomplice, Arshad Khan, only because the information was 'top secret', he said. The Maharashtra and Gujarat police failed to arrest arms smugglers thrice while UP police failed twice to bust fake Indian currency rackets during this period.

"Almost all 27 accused, co-accused and conspirators in the Mumbai blasts, 113 accused persons allegedly involved in the

cheating and foreign exchange forgery cases, and over 23 persons accused of kidnapping and murders are staying in UAE," the CBI official said. Of the 471 fugitives, 27 are wanted in the Mumbai serial blasts case, 10 for the Purulia armsdrop case and four in a train blast case. Five persons are wanted in the Goa child sex abuse racket and seven for the IA hijacking case.

Claiming that no serious political and administrative efforts were made during the past several years to force the authorities to get them extradited to India, a senior home ministry official said: "Despite the Red Corner notices issued by the Interpol on the request of the CBI, lack of uniformity in law was one of the biggest hurdles."

Interpol had issued 176 Red Corner notices against the accused who escaped to Dubai and other parts of the world after committing crimes in India, he added.

The CBI official said over 50 key drug smugglers are hiding in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal.

THE STATESMAN

12 FEB 2002

Ansari admits to USIS attack

**Statesman News Service
and Agencies**

NEW DELHI/KOLKATA, Feb. 10. — Aftab Ansari has admitted to his involvement in the American Center attack in Kolkata and his links with jihadis in Pakistan, especially with Omar Sheikh, one of the three terrorists released by India during the hijacking of IC-814 in 1999.

“He has come out with the fact that he has links with terrorists and jihadis in Pakistan, specially with Omar Sheikh. He has also admitted that the attack on the American Center was carried out at his instance in order to avenge Asif Reza Khan’s death,” said the CBI.

Agency sources said: “He has also revealed that he was the man behind arms smuggling in Gujarat in which some of his associates were arrested by the CBI. He further said about six gangs are operating in the coastal areas of Gujarat under the command of Dubai-based underworld dons.”

Sources in the government said the USA asked the UAE to hand over Ansari to India “immediately.”

A senior MHA official said: “The entire operation was done under close monitoring of the US authorities. The USA asked the UAE to prevent his movements and hand him over to India immediately as his name figured as main accused in the American Center shoot-out case.” The foreign ministry had

said yesterday that the accused was arrested by the Dubai authorities on 23 January, a day after the attack. Ansari was caught when he was leaving for Pakistan.

The CBI director, Mr PC Sharma, maintained that Ansari’s “detention” by the UAE was carried out on the basis of the evidence provided by India. However, he denied any US pressure on his “arrest” saying “it will jeopardise” the investigation.

Who wants what

- Kolkata Police wants Aftab in connection with the attack on the American Center and also some abduction cases.
- Delhi Police believes Ansari may give leads on terror networks and the ISI’s involvement in them
- Bihar police prepares to question Ansari to unravel the passport racket in the state.

Ansari, alias Farhan Malik, held yesterday by the CBI along with his associate Raju Sharma after being deported from Dubai, were today produced before the Patiala House Court and remanded in seven-day transit custody. The court sent Raju to five days of transit remand.

The CBI, West Bengal Police and Gujarat Police would interrogate Ansari “independently” during his remand. Sources said both governments have

sent senior police officers to take him to their states for interrogation.

While a team of the West Bengal Police reached New Delhi last night, policemen from Gujarat arrived at the capital this evening. Both police teams have “a considerable amount of evidence”, including recorded statements of the other accused persons held to establish his links with terrorists across the border.

Ansari was interrogated in New Delhi by a Kolkata Police team. He will be brought to the city “in a couple of days”, the Kolkata police commissioner, Mr Sujoy Chakraborty said.

What information DC-DD (I) Mr Soumen Mitra and his team elicited from Ansari was not known. The IG-CID also left for Delhi this afternoon. A senior CID official said his agency had held discussions with the CBI and Delhi Police to bring Ansari to the city.

(Bihar Police is preparing to interrogate Ansari to unravel the passport racket in the state, the DIG (Patna zone), Mr AC Verma, said. He was a “very important link in the issuance of passport from the regional passport office in Patna on the basis of forged documents”, adds SNS from Patna.

“We’d like to send a police team to Kolkata to interrogate Ansari, subject to the government’s approval,” Mr Verma

**Turn to page 8
Ansari’s arrest strengthens
Buddha’s position: page 8**

THE STATESMAN

11 FEB 2002

Ansari was pulling strings from Dubai: CBI

By Vinay Kumar

NEW DELHI, FEB. 10. Even as the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) today got seven days transit remand for the underworld don Aftab Ansari from a Delhi court, the agency faces a daunting task ahead in unearthing his links and tracing his associates.

If his deportation from Dubai speaks volumes of international police cooperation and marks triumph of diplomacy, it is now for the CBI and the Kolkata, Delhi and Gujarat police investigators to nail him by gathering evidence that would clinch the case in their favour when taken up by the courts.

"Probably, Aftab Ansari is the first big catch for us who has spent a considerable time in Pakistan. He was fast emerging as head of a crime syndicate and pulling strings from Dubai," the CBI Director, P.C.

Sharma, told *The Hindu*. Mr. Sharma appeared satisfied over the fact that coordinated efforts of the Indian High Commission in Dubai, the Ministry of External Affairs and the CBI culminated in the deportation of Aftab Ansari alias Farhan Malik.

Sources in the CBI said the fact that Ansari was given a Pakistani passport and used to often visit Rawalpindi, Islamabad and Lahore indicated that he did enjoy the patronage of the authorities there. However, it is yet to be ascertained if he had any links with Dawood Ibrahim, the prime accused in the 1993 Bombay serial blast case and forms part of India's list of 20 most-wanted terrorists handed over to Pakistan.

With the assistance of Omar Sheikh, one of the three terrorists exchanged for the safe return of hostages in the Kandahar IC-814 hijacking in December 1999, Ansari was

given the task of extending logistic support to the Harkat-ul-Jehadi-Islami (HUJI) saboteurs who infiltrated through Bangladesh, arrange for their escape operations and abduct high-value targets to secure the release of Nasarullah Langrayal from Jodhpur jail.

PTI reports:

Aftab Ansari has admitted to the CBI about his involvement in the attack and links with terrorists and 'jehadis' in Pakistan. The CBI, while seeking his transit remand, told a Delhi court that Ansari during his interrogation also admitted of forming a countrywide network of arms, narcotics smugglers for carrying out illegal activities in India. CBI sources said Ansari had entertained a desire to overshadow the "clout" of the underworld don, Dawood Ibrahim and become another Ramirez Sanchez better known as "Carlos, the Jackal".

Ansari was only deported: Page 5

THE HINDU

AN EXAMPLE PAK. CAN EMULATE: DELHI

UAE deports mastermind behind Kolkata attack

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, FEB. 9. In a dramatic development, the United Arab Emirates has deported Aftab Ansari alias Farhan Malik, prime suspect in the Kolkata attack outside the American Center, thereby opening the possibility of establishing that India and the U.S. are both victims of terrorism radiating from Pakistani soil.

Ansari's accomplice, Rajender Kumar Anadkot, has also been deported. The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, first discussed Ansari's extradition at a public meeting in Meerut today. Both Ansari and Rajender were brought from Dubai by a special Government plane.

Investigations here have indicated that Ansari has links with the Pakistan-based militant, Omar Sheikh, who has been implicated in three major terrorist incidents targeting the U.S. and India. Sheikh, with whom Ansari came into contact in New Delhi's Tihar jail, is in the limelight for allegedly masterminding the kidnapping of the American journalist, Daniel Pearl, in Karachi. He is linked to the hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane, IC-814, to Kandahar, in 1999. And investigations are on for determining Sheikh's nexus with the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center.

Authorities are also probing whether part of the ransom ob-



Aftab Ansari, main accused in the Kolkata shooting case, being taken to the CBI headquarters in New Delhi on Saturday. — Photo: Rajeev Bhatt

tained from the kidnapping of a Kolkata shoe baron in July last, in which Ansari was allegedly

involved, was passed on to Mohammad Atta — who led the WTC attack — through Sheikh.

New Delhi is likely to share the information with the FBI.

Pointing to his Pakistani links, the Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs, R. M. Abhayankar, said Ansari was apprehended by the UAE authorities while trying to leave for Pakistan on January 23. Ansari was travelling on a Pakistani passport.

Praising the UAE Government for its "exceptional cooperation," he said the authorities in Abu Dhabi had set an example for Pakistan to emulate with respect to the list of 20 wanted terrorists handed over to Islamabad. To a query, he said the deportation had not taken place by invoking the extradition treaty between India and the UAE — it was the result of a political decision by the UAE authorities.

The External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, thanking the UAE's Defence Minister, Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid, for his "exceptional gesture," said the decision was in line with the U.N. Security Council resolution 1373 which urged all the countries to root out terrorism from their soil.

Sources here said if Ansari's links with international terrorism were established, it was likely to deepen Indo-U.S. cooperation in countering terrorism and enhance the pressure on Pakistan to act on India's list of 20 fugitives.

THE HINDU

10 FEB 2002

Nepal to hand over Flight IC-814 papers to CBI

Our Political Bureau
NEW DELHI 7 FEBRUARY

IN A boost to India's efforts to secure the extradition of those involved in the hijacking of the Indian Airlines Flight IC-814 from Kandahar, the Nepal government has agreed to hand over original documents relating to the passenger list and other key papers to the Central Bureau of Investigation.

Nepal's decision to hand over the documents was conveyed to home secretary Kamal Pande by his counterpart Keshav Rajbhandari at the secretary level talks. Nepal also promised to take steps to combat terrorism, counterfeit currency and



of the US, journalist Daniel Pearl will give further fillip to the cooperation. Omar Sheikh, the Jaish jehadi, was released in exchange for the return of the IA passengers from Kandahar.

At the meeting with the Nepalese authorities on Wednesday, the Union home ministry had sought cooperation for curbing the mushrooming of madrasas on the Indo-Nepal border as well as growth of some "commercial units". The request has been pending with the Nepalese authorities for some time, but it is likely to get better response in the post-9/11 climate. Nepal has already taken steps to regulate 500 odd madrasas in the kingdom.

Mr Pande said he conveyed to Mr Rajbhandari India's concern over subversive activities of Pakistan's ISI from Nepal and the need for closer cooperation and coordination in preventing them. According to the agreed minutes signed by Mr Pande and Mr Rajbhandari after the two-day meeting, the Nepalese side appreciated the cooperation extended by New Delhi in curbing Maoist violence which has claimed hundreds of lives in the Himalayan Kingdom in the last few months.

Stating that the Maoist Communist Centre and People's War Group have been banned, India assured Nepal that it would crack

down on Maoist supporters and groups and even consider deporting Nepalese citizens involved in such activities.

Both sides decided to exchange information about ISI-backed mercenaries, criminals, smugglers and poachers at the district level through respective district magistrates on both sides of the border. Policing along the Indo-Nepal borders in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar and West Bengal has already been tightened. Mr Pande said he agreed with his Nepalese counterpart on relaxation with regard to production of documents for students and minors travelling with their relatives by planes.

The Economic Times
The Economic Times

India & Russia sink N-sub talk, ink pact

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, February 8

SAYING IT was innocent of the reported efforts to acquire nuclear submarines, India on Friday reached an agreement with Russia for the procurement of the 44,000-tonne Kiev class aircraft carrier, Admiral Gorshkov, and the lease of four Tupolev-22 supersonic nuclear bombers and maritime reconnaissance aircraft. Contracts are likely to be signed by summer.

The agreement was reached after three days of hard bargaining at the second meeting of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation in New Delhi that began on Wednesday. The Russians had offered various defence items in a package deal. Four protocols on defence cooperation were signed by the two sides.

While Defence Minister George Fernandes claimed that "there is no nuclear submarine", Russian Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov asserted that "nuclear submarines had not been discussed" and that he was "not prepared to address any questions on the subject".

"Allow me not to name the projects and programmes on our agenda. The most important thing is that we have embarked on joint development of hi-tech defence projects.

"We shall work on an absolutely equal basis in the interest of our armed forces and keeping in mind foreign markets," Klebanov told mediapersons after the conclusion of the meeting of the Inter-Governmental Commission, which he co-chairs along with Fernandes.

Klebanov said the concept pa-

per for the joint development of a fifth generation fighter aircraft would be presented to India soon.

The agreements reached provide for setting up on priority medium refit and upgrade facilities for 877 EKM submarines in India, cooperation in satellite global surveillance systems and speeding up the supply of T-90 Main Battle Tanks to India. The two sides also agreed on the supply of Krasnapol terminally-guided munitions (TGMs) and laser designators to India.

Fernandes disclosed that field trials of the SMERCH multi-barrel rocket launchers would be held in May. The SMERCH system is expected to give more teeth to the Indian artillery.

Justifying the acquisition of Admiral Gorshkov and the TU-22 strategic bombers for the Indian Navy, Fernandes said, "Given the responsibility we have in the seas around us, it will be very necessary to have these platforms."

While Klebanov asserted that "contracts were likely to be signed by summer", Fernandes declined to put a time frame for the induction of these platforms. "Technical discussions have been completed, and price negotiations is what needs to be done. We shall be on the job soon. How much time it will take thereafter is difficult to forecast," he said.

The four protocols signed are: Protocol on the Joint Working Group on Ship Building, Aviation and Land Systems, Protocol on Krasnapol TGMs, Protocol on Military-Technical Cooperation, and the omnibus Protocol on the Inter-Governmental Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation.

Krasnapol deal through despite CAG objections

Vishal Thapar
New Delhi, February 8

OVERLOOKING OBJECTIONS of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), the Ministry of Defence today signed a contract with Russia for purchase of Krasnapol Terminally Guided Munitions (TGMs).

The Army has confirmed that Krasnapol munitions were able to engage only 25 to 30 per cent of targets in the Kargil sector during field trials.

The CAG, in his Review of Procurements for Operation Vijay (Kargil), had said that the Ministry of Defence had used war as an excuse to "push through" its earlier contract with KBP Tula, Russia, for the purchase of 1,000 Krasnapol TGMs and 10 laser designators at a cost of Rs 151 crore in August 1999.

These projectiles were being considered by the Army even before the Kargil War. The CAG observed that the condition for further trial was imposed in the contract as the usefulness of Krasnapol had "not been established in trials held in February-March 1999".

Krasnapol was found suffering from limitations of range, angle and precision in high-altitude areas, where laser-guided munitions are most crucially required.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

9 FEB 2002

FBI, CBI together in IC-814 hijack probe

Soumen Datta
Kolkata, February 7

THE CBI has stepped up cooperation with the FBI in the investigation of the December 1999 hijack of Indian Airlines flight IC-814 to Kandahar. The FBI probe began after Jenny More, a US citizen aboard the flight, gave a statement on the incident to the agency and the FBI registered a case in Hawaii in March 2000.

The US Administration has something called Extra-Territorial Law, a provision in its Statute, which empowers American investigative agencies to probe such incidents anywhere in the world. Under this law, the FBI retains the right to probe incidents of this nature no matter where they have taken place.

The FBI has since been in close contact with the CBI and sent three teams to India. The probe gained momentum after the September 11 strikes in New York and Washington, with Peter Lee and Carl Carol, two agents, visiting New Delhi in October.

"The CBI decided to extend all help to the FBI because we found the Pakistani attitude extremely difficult to accept. They refused

to do anything in the matter, though we had given them the names, addresses and phone numbers of the hijackers — Ibrahim Atahar, Sunny Ahmed Qazi, Zahoor Ibrahim Mistry, Sahid Sayeed Akhtar and Zakir.

"The Pakistani agencies didn't even care to get back to us," Loknath Behra, DIG, Special Investigation Cell, CBI, told *Hindustan Times*.

The list of 20, recently handed over to Islamabad by Delhi, had all these names, Behra said. After the Black Tuesday strikes, we handed over conclusive evidence to the FBI. After this, the

FBI examined as many as 12 witnesses. "We helped the FBI and got the witnesses in place so that they could question them," Behra said.

It was also after this that Omar Sheikh's name resurfaced. Sheikh is one of the terrorists India had released to buy the hijacked passengers' freedom. "His name has popped up in many cases since then, and he is said to have links even to the American Center attack.

"Also, it's the same Omar Sheikh who was behind the abduction of five foreigners in Delhi. Among those kidnapped was

an American citizen, who lodged a complaint in the US. Now, Sheikh's name has been linked again to *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl's abduction. It seems, this man has been troubling the Americans for a long time now," Behra said.

"Now that the FBI is into both cases, we can expect progress. The Pakistanis can't stonewall the probe any more. This aspect of US pressure is crucial," Behra explained.

The FBI team will return to India in March and examine more witnesses in the IC-814 and the Delhi abduction cases.

Nepal documents

NEPAL, ON Thursday agreed to hand India all documents relating to the IC-814 hijack. The decision was conveyed to home secretary Kamal Pande by his Nepal counterpart Keshav Rajbhandari after the two-day home secretary-level talks in Delhi. The papers, including the passenger list and flight details, will be made available to the CBI by the Nepalese Embassy.

PTI, New Delhi

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Navy in Defence review with US officers

HT Correspondent
Chennai, February 6

MILITARY CO-OPERATION between India and the US touched a new high today when top officers of the Indian and US navies reviewed several defence issues, including joint combat against terrorism and sharing of Intelligence.

The dialogue was conducted between Deputy Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral SV Gopalachary, and Commander of the US Seventh Fleet, Vice Admiral James Wallace Metzger, on board the flagship Blue Ridge, which docked in Chennai yesterday. The meeting is part of the series of interactions between the Seventh Fleet staff and Indian military and civilian officials on regional issues of concern and combined naval exercises.

Adm. Metzger, who arrived in India ahead of the flagship and held the first round of talks with officials in Delhi, held a preliminary 90-minute meeting with Vice Admiral Gopalachary here yesterday.

The Admiral said the meeting went off very well. He said the two countries could learn a lot from each other on ways to fight terrorism.

On the bomb attack on USS Cole at Aden, he said that sharing of Intelligence and knowledge could have helped avert the attack.

This is the fifth time in a year that a US naval ship has visited India.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

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Nato invites Navy

Srinjoy Chowdhury in New Delhi

Feb. 5. — For the first time since the Pokhran nuclear blasts in May 1998, Indian armed forces' officers have been invited to participate in an exercise by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation as 'observers'.

Two Indian Naval officers have been invited to participate in the exercise in the Baltic Sea in northern Europe between 1 and 15 March. Exercise Strong Resolve will see Nato in a peace-keeping operation, involving the sea and the coastline. Besides the USA and Britain, Poland, Italy, Spain and Portugal are directly participating, along with Turkey, Norway and France.

Both the Indian Naval officers are likely to be middle-level officers, possibly commanders (majors) and one of them will be on the command headquarters of the exercise, a Royal Navy frigate. The other officer will be on a frigate too.

The Navy is likely to accept the invitation, top officials confirmed. Top Indian officers of the Army and Navy are already working on future ties, including joint exercises.

The invitation is considered very significant as it is a recognition of India's position by the world's most powerful military alliance. The exercise in question is not even in India's area of influence — the Indian Ocean, but in Europe. Military-to-military ties between India and the Western countries, chiefly the USA and Britain, are still improving after the frost that began since the 1998 Pokhran nuclear blasts. The improvements came specially after the 11 September attack on America.

THE STATESMAN

6 FEB 2002

Israel radar at work on border

9.03 New
FROM SUJAN DUTTA

New Delhi, Feb. 3: An Israeli electronic surveillance system that tracks missiles was deployed on the quiet along the Line of Control since the Pakistani troops build-up began in end-October.

The system possibly gave crucial inputs to the Indian defence establishment before it fully deployed its army on the borders and put all three services on operational alert.

The Israeli Green Pine radar system is being negotiated for purchase by India since last year. But even before a formal seal on the agreement to acquire Green Pine has been signed and announced, India used the system in its "trip-wire" deployment since the Pakistani army conducted its exercise "Operation Khabardar" in end-October.

The system is said to be under "evaluation". Official sources neither confirm nor deny it has been used and that it continues to be in operation. The system was installed — it is possible more than one radar was put into use — with the help of technical experts from Israel who were in Kashmir for a short duration. It is understood they have since left.

The Green Pine is a ground-based radar system made by Israel's Elta company. It is said to be capable of tracking a missile for 400 km and is normally used in conjunction with the Arrow anti-missile missile. Arrow is also made by the Israelis and, combined with the Green Pine all-weather radar, it forms an umbrella of protection against enemy missiles.

In the India-Pakistan context, the system is assessed to be of great strategic value to New Delhi because of the inputs it might be capable of giving on Pakistani tactical installations close to India, including at least one of its nuclear facilities at Kahuta and Sargodha.

It is possible that the Green Pine radar actually entered service in India even before October. A report in the Israeli daily *Haaretz* on March 20 last year said India had been supplied parts of the sophisticated radar system Green Pine.

India and Israel generally play down their military ties for diplomatic reasons, chief among them being the resentment that might be caused in the Arab world. Last month, the US, too, frowned on Indian efforts to acquire the Israeli Phalcon airborne early warning systems.

Aside from buying military equipment, India may have acted as a testing pad for Israeli weapon systems. As part of this, an Israeli Navy Dolphin submarine came up to Balasore to test-fire an anti-missile missile. The Dolphins are believed to be armed with nuclear missiles.

THE TELEGRAPH

11 03 2007

American combat systems for India

Vishal Thapar
New Delhi, February 3

OVERCOMING FIVE decades of mutual suspicion, India is poised to receive for the first time combat systems from the USA, soon.

The *Hindustan Times* has learnt that the US Departments of State and Defence have cleared the sale of P3 Orion multi-mission maritime aircraft, along with Harpoon anti-ship missiles, and the Sea Hawk helicopters among 21 military systems to India.

Licences for the sale of the 21 items are now awaiting notification by the US Congress. These items include weapon locating radars, aircraft engines and submarine rescue facilities. Observers say this marks a watershed in Indo-US relationship. So far, the US has sold India only two squadrons of C-119 Packet transport aircraft in the early 1950s, six two-seater Bel G3 casualty evacuation helicopter and four Sikorsky S55 helicopters around 1958.

But the 1958 US-Pakistan al-

Troops movement cost

AROUND 3,500 people have been displaced and standing crops and fodder worth crores lost due to movement of troops in Bikaner district, according to a report by the district administration. The State Government will take up the matter with the defence ministry for compensation to the displaced persons.

PTI, Bikaner

liance under the Cold War backdrop stopped even the transfer of non-lethal defence equipment to India. Between 1954 and 1958, the US revamped the Pakistan military. Pakistan got the US F-104 - then among the only three supersonic fighter aircraft in the world along with the British Lightning and the Soviet MiG-21 - and the F-86 Sabrejets by 1956.

India was forced to buy the Mystere jets from France and the Hunters from Britain as a counter-balance in 1957 and 1958. The US gave Pakistan the B-57

bombers, and India shopped for the Canberra in Britain.

The 1962 Chinese aggression exposed India's military weaknesses. India now looked to the US for help. But the US provided India only with small arms, warm clothing, radio sets, radar equipment and air support by deploying two squadrons of the C-130 Hercules heavy lift military transport aircraft at the Palam base in 1963.

The US linked military assistance to concessions on Kashmir. India resisted, and by 1964 stopped aid. An embargo was clamped following the 1965 War. The US denial, and simultaneous equipping of Pakistan, pushed India to the Soviets, which increased the estrangement.

A 1984 MoU on transfer of high technology aimed at improving the relationship. Much of these requirements are maturing now. Ties have been looking up since 1996, and survived India's 1998 nuclear tests. The litmus, say experts, is in the state of the Defence sales relationship.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

4 FEB 2002

Motive: Delhi, Kolkata disagree again

■ Accused says target was US: Home Ministry ■ No such statement: Kolkata cops

AJAY SURI &
SABYASACHI BANDOPADHYAY
NEW DELHI, KOLKATA, FEB 3

ONCE again, New Delhi and Kolkata have two contrasting versions of the same story: the interrogation of Jamaluddin Nasir who was arrested on January 29 in connection with the attack on the American Center.

Nasir, remanded to police custody till February 13, has been accused of providing shelter to the attackers.

Today the Union Home Ministry claimed that Nasir has said—during his interrogation by a joint team of the Kolkata police and the Delhi police—that the strike was aimed specifically at US interests in India.

And that although Dubai-based Aftab Ansari (alias



Farhan Malik) was the mastermind, the Lashkar-e-Toiba was “actively” involved as well.

In Kolkata, however, the police reacted angrily.

Additional Commissioner of Police in charge of the De-

TECTIVE Department Damodar Sarangi told *The Indian Express*: “I have no information that Nasir said this. I don’t know what New Delhi is saying but Nasir didn’t say anything like this.”

A senior officer, closely

involved with the interrogation, also denied that Nasir had made any such claims.

But the Home Ministry claimed that Nasir confessed to having been “fully trained” by Pakistan in terrorist activities. He was then shifted to Kathmandu early last year, and from there is said to have arrived in India.

Home Ministry officials say that according to Nasir’s confessional statement, Zahid (one of the two accused who was killed by the police in Hazaribagh) had told Nasir that they wanted to strike at the Bhawani Bhawan, the office of the CID in Kolkata. But the target was “changed” after Malik called up from Dubai asking them to zero in on the American Center.

CVC report: Poll logic guides govt

Sanjay Singh in New Delhi

Feb. 3. - The Central Vigilance Commissioner's report on defence deals is a potential double-edged weapon. The government would prefer to sit over it till the Assembly polls in four states are over and the political mood of the electorate is clear, sources said. But the government's pretext was that the report was a classified secret document, said sources.

The CVC report could well be a 'tool' in the post-poll scenario. The government might need to depend on the Opposition if the ruling coalitions bite dust in polls. Even if the results are favourable, the government might release the report - only to embarrass the Opposition.

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Sources said the government was using its discretion not to place the report before the Parliamentary Accounts Committee headed by Mr ND Tiwari due to other considerations.

The government, the defence minister in particular, had nothing to fear about the report's contents.

Mr George Fernandes had asked the CVC in February last to inquire into over 70 defence deals clinched since 1989 and directed a special audit by the Comptroller and Auditor-General on major purchases made by the defence ministry.

The purchases during Mr Fernandes' tenure pertained to the Kargil conflict. The political dust it raised is history.

Other major defence deals under scrutiny belonged to the PV Narasimha Rao government. Mr Sharad Pawar

was then the defence minister.

The Narasimha Rao government in 1993 entered into a deal with a Bulgarian firm, Teraton, to purchase 1,00,000 AK-47s for fighting terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir. Then considered to be biggest contract after Bofors, it was flawed on many counts, including the manner in which it was signed.

The biggest ever deal of Rs 6700 crores to procure Sukhoi fighter aircraft was initiated during the Congress regime but was settled during the United Front government, with Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav as the defence minister.

Making public the CVC's findings on some of those deals could in fact help the government turn the tables on the Opposition.

THE STATESMAN

4 FEB 2002

India set to get 2 Russian n-submarines

By Sandeep Dikshit

NEW DELHI, FEB. 2. The coming visit of the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Ilya Klebanov, is likely to see the finalisation of an agreement to lease two Russian nuclear submarines, according to Government sources here.

The submarines would help India counterbalance the growing Chinese influence in the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal and also give teeth to the Indian Navy in the Arabian Sea. The submarines could partly answer India's search for a "second strike" nuclear capability.

If the deal goes through as planned, the submarines may arrive at the Indian ports by 2004 when the design for an indigenous nuclear-powered submarine, the Advance Technology Vessel (ATV), is also expected to be finalised.

Russia already has 14 such silent multi-role submarines and the funds from this deal are expected to finance its ongoing work on the fourth generation submarines codenamed Project 885.

Sources said the deal did not violate any nuclear or missile control regimes. However, in deference to the Missile Tech-

nology Control Regime, Russia is likely to replace the submarines' 3,000-km-range cruise missiles with shorter version 300-km-range missiles.

Although the observations by the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, and reports from Russia had suggested that the aircraft-carrier Admiral Gorshkov could be the first major Indo-Russian deal for naval assets, sources indicated that the agreement for leasing nuclear submarines appeared closer to realisation.

Mr. Klebanov is arriving on Tuesday for scheduled meetings of the Indo-Russian joint working group on military and technical (JWG-MT) cooperation. A non-military component of his transaction will be his interface with the Finance Minister, Yashwant Sinha.

His visit is likely to see the signing of a protocol on military hardware in which an indicative list of items sought by India will be presented.

This protocol will be preceded by meetings of the two subgroups on JWG-MT headed on the Indian side by the Defence Secretary, Yogendra Narain and the Additional Secretary (Defence Production and Supplies), Dharendra Singh.

THE HINDU

5 FEB 2002

India's tryst with terrorism

12/13, our equivalent of America's 9/11, was unquestionably the most audacious act of terrorism on Indian soil to date. Pakistan might be the villain of the piece but it would be educative for us to "turn the searchlight inwards" as the saying goes, and examine what the flaws are in our governance system that the terrorists so gainfully exploited particularly after the Red Fort attack in 2000.

For starters, no terrorist act of the magnitude of 12/13 can succeed unless it has what is known in counter-terrorism doctrine as "logistic backup from within the target area".

In other words, the terrorists involved must have been given adequate sanctuary and material support locally, such assistance usually being afforded via a VIP politician who is bought off by organisations like the ISI. Without this backup, no big league terrorist act is possible.

Therefore, as a first step, our inquiry should focus on tracing those high-level personae who provided succour to these terrorists. Catching the small fry as we are wont, will not amount to much. As an analogy, a Cabinet-ranking minister of the Uttar Pradesh government was removed by the chief minister recently because he harboured a gang of kidnapers along with their victim. There was also an earlier case in New Delhi where a Union minister, now dead, was similarly charged when he allowed some members of the Dawood Ibrahim outfit to use a public sector guesthouse in his domain.

Actually, the fundamental flaw is in our Constitution which blandly permits people with criminal links to enter the nation's administration. In no civilised country is a behind-the-bars historysheeter encouraged to stand for elections and win in the process!

Hence, the second step is to amend the Constitution in so stringent a fashion as to summarily debar any individual with the slightest of links of this kind. It would be wholly appropriate for the current Constitution Review Committee to go into this aspect in great depth. Our

JK DUTT analyses the flaws in our governance system that have given terrorists a free run, by turning the searchlight inwards. The fundamental flaw is in our Constitution which permits people with criminal links to enter the nation's administration

insincerity in tackling the politician-criminal nexus is evident from the way the Vohra Commission report on the subject has been proscribed.

Third, two fresh Central ministerial appointments are essential - a Cabinet status minister for Intelligence, and a minister of state for security. The former will be accountable to Parliament for all matters related to Intelligence; it is doubtful whether any country can beat ours in mismanaging Intelligence.

The minister of security will be responsible for overseeing security in all the states at the macro-level. A corresponding minister of security

appointment is necessary in the states, too, and here Intelligence can also be assigned to this incumbent. The minister of security's prime charter will be to direct the physical constituents of security to include training and deployment of personnel, weapons system and individual protection gear, barrier control, route management, communication networks of all types, monitoring of activities, and provisioning of modern equipment. 12/13 clearly showed the failure of all these.

Fourth, in Kashmir proper one specific step is urgently required to make cross-border terrorism really expensive for Pakistan. We need to create a three-four kilometre deep barrier on our side of the border from Point NJ 9842 to Samba and seed this with a plethora of anti-terrorist hardware like mines, improvised explosive devices, booby traps, poisoned concertina barbed wire, registered artillery and mortar targets, machine gun sweeps and trip flares, which should be complemented with first-rate surveillance systems.

Similar arrangements are also required for the Bangladesh border. Affected villages have to be relocated elsewhere. Fifth, relevant tenets from universally accepted counter-terrorism doctrines have to be ingrained among all our leadership cadres.

A golden tenet of this doctrine is, "Do not negotiate with terrorists just liquidate them."



A Border Security Force officer lays a wreath on the coffin of a colleague killed by militants on the outskirts of Srinagar, in Ahmadnagar, on Wednesday. - AP/PTI

We have been flouting this unabashedly as seen by several of our Prime Ministers talking to such characters abroad. This is pure *infra dig*. Talks of this nature never bear fruit, witness Nepal's predicament.

A Rand Corporation study conducted sometime back on the psyche of terrorist leaders covering Carlos, the Baader-Meinhoff second string, luminaries of Hamas, and LTTE rank-holders has brought out a straight cut behavioural science inhesion: a terrorist chief invariably desires to remain in the limelight, more so with the media. This is only feasible as long as he is the centrepiece of an ongoing problem. His importance fades when he signs and abides by a peace accord.

Thus, no peace overtures will ever get anywhere in the long run. A terrorist redeems on but one clincher, the bullet.

Lastly, with the conclusion of the operations in Afghanistan, it is to be expected that a large number of the Al-Qaida mercenaries will be directed into Kashmir and beyond by Pakistan. In fact, this is already going on. The route cause of this scourge is the brewing Kashmir problem.

It would be prudent for both India and Pakistan to solve the problem by the simple method of converting the Line of Control into a formal international border. Reference to the Shimla discussions of 1972 are pertinent in this context and must be rejuvenated.

It would behove the intelligentsia plus media movers and shakers of both countries to exert pressure on their respective governments towards this end.

A worthy proposition is to invoke a third-party roundtable on the lines of Rambouillet for deliberations.

This will strengthen the hands of New Delhi and Islamabad. Ideally, such a roundtable should comprise (besides India and Pakistan) Australia, China, Russia, the European Union, the Organisation of Islamic Conference, Canada, the USA, the African Union, and some personalities like Nelson Mandela, Kofi Annan and Michael Moore.

Officially classifying the Indo-Pak boundary in terms of international norms should not be difficult since a codified delineation already exists on the ground.

Such classification will help sanitise the border which in turn will contain trans-border terrorism as well as induce stability on the sub-continent.

(The author is Lieutenant-Colonel, retired, Indian Army.)

NATIONAL SECURITY

MPs And MLAs Should Set An Example

By AD MODDIE

9.08.2001
5-6

If the terrorist attack on Parliament on 13 December 2001 is to be a real though late wake-up call in the national interest for MPs and MLAs of all parties, they should perform and behave with better discipline inside legislatures, if they expect security to be enhanced outside. Seven security guards, who paid with their lives for the security of MPs should be on their conscience. The public now demands a realistic, positive change.

Politicians have directly and indirectly been responsible for the gigantic economic haemorrhage of more than Rs 500,000 crores - by way of PSU losses (Rs 40,000 crores) and unproductive capital assets (Rs 240,000 crores), non-merit centre and state subsidies (Rs 211,653 crores) and inefficient cost over-runs of public projects (Rs 42,000 crores). For all this there is virtually no concern and accountability by MPs and MLAs. A fraction or one-tenth of this wastage could have doubled the average defence budget of recent years of Rs 30,000 to Rs 40,000 crores. Its denial has led to decades of delay in light training aircraft with huge costs in precious lives of pilots and high-cost fighter aircraft; and inadequate and sophisticated high-altitude equipment and clothing for soldiers suffering and dying in places like Siachen.

Neglect

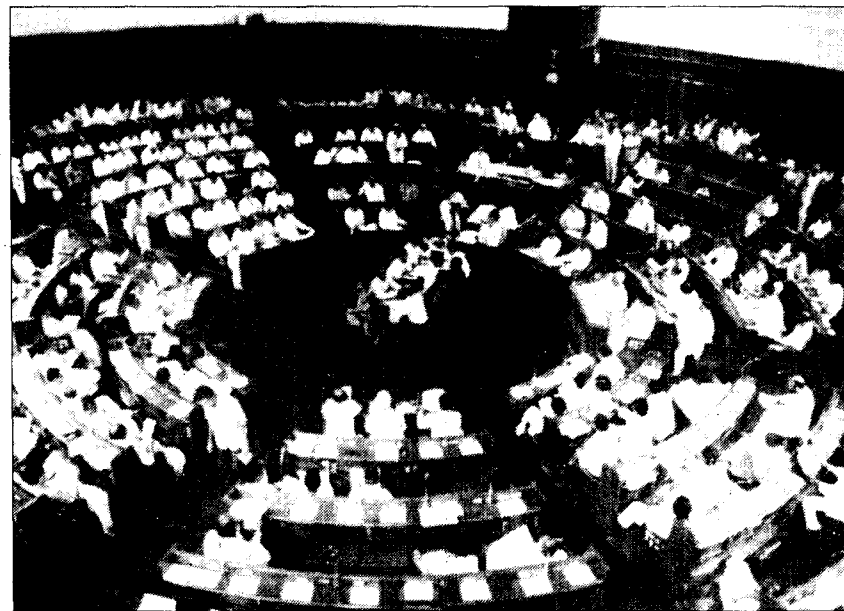
The defence budget was dismissed by Parliament in less than 10 minutes without care, concern and sound debate. No passionate descents into the wells of the house for these! This itself shows a criminal neglect of India's central security needs by all parties, apart from the neglect of India's crushing economic haemorrhage. All this demands responsible behaviour by MPs and MLAs if they wish to demonstrate to the people of India their serious patriotic concern for India's security in all aspects — military, police, intelligence and economic.

First, MPs must give close attention to defence budgets, debate all defence issues in depth and ensure that all India's security resource needs are met, espe-

The author is formerly of the Indian Civil Service.

cially before their own prompt increases in emoluments and perks. There is not a single member of Parliament who is a recognised defence/security expert. Nor any in any state assembly even on internal security matters. In all legislatures, there should be specialised committees on all security matters, appropriate to Parliament and the states.

Instead of near-terrorist and dysfunctional behaviour inside legislatures, legislators of Parliament and states



should set better examples in (a) the first national need for security, namely disciplined behaviour, and (b) their productive work for which they are paid and cost the public of India hundreds of crores.

Wastage

Just three examples of enormous wastage of time in petty, disruptive opportunist politics. Why has Parliament failed to pass the financial responsibility Bill to stop India's gigantic economic haemorrhage of over Rs 500,000 crores, and so starving India's vital security needs?

Why has Parliament also not passed the Money Laundering Bill, when it is common knowledge worldwide that money laundering has been responsible for organised crime, narco-terrorism, software counterfeiting, violation of intellectual property rights and criminal internal and external financial counter-systems used by merchants of terror. Money laundering not only directly helps "jehadi" and non-jehadi terrorists, it debilitates the total security systems of

nations, including financial institutions, global finance, and governments.

Pakistan's inflow from Afghan narco-terrorism has been estimated at about \$12 billion, when its foreign exchange reserves are less than a tenth of that figure, and far less than its export earnings. It is this which has been the fuel for cross-border terrorism in J&K for the last decade. Why has Parliament slept for 13 years after passing the Benami Transaction Prohibition Act in 1988, with no rules for confiscation of property? Yet, our MPs are asleep on all such bills critical to the resources and security of India.

12

Parliament and state assemblies need to carry greater credibility on their concern for India's total security by more disciplined and productive behaviour. Having ignored indiscipline, low productivity for 50 years, in an economy supposed to be dedicated primarily to economic development; they should, like good professional institutions, give themselves high productivity standards initiated by the speakers and leaders of all parties in the following ways: attendance ratios every day of all legislators of all parties and independents, not just fraudulent attendance signatures which should be open to the media for scrutiny; recording the number of hours/days with no quorum; the productivity performance every week in number and names of bills processed and passed; the work output of select committees every month and in every session; strict disciplined conformity to security check regulations with no exhibition of VIP egos with security staff, now at last recognised by all as undermining the psychology of the very security staff who sacrificed their lives on 13 December to keep MPs alive; and no subletting of official quarters of MPs and MLAs, especially without proper security checks.

Policies

In addition, MPs and MLAs of all parties should ensure that central and state governments have strong security policies and mechanisms actually functioning. Since India's security strategies are not confined to military, police and secretariat aspects, there should be clear and effective national strategies for food and nutrition security, for the human development index security, for power security, for telecom security, and for specific security measures beyond legislatures and VIP residences at critical nuclear and oil installations, stock exchanges, scientific research institutions, cities, airports and ports.

MPs and MLAs should set a national example in all aspects of security if they are to regain national credibility. The media, both English and vernacular, should act as the public's watchdog in a follow-up of such measures.

THE STRATEGIST

Five killed as Army foils major infiltration bid

Kavita Suri in Rajouri

Jan. 31. — Contradicting General Pervez Musharraf's claims to denounce terrorism, the Indian Army killed five terrorists on Wednesday morning in Rajouri's Keri sub-sector. This is the first major infiltration bid to be foiled after the Pakistani President's much-hyped and "historic" speech.

The infiltration of these five terrorists into Indian territory and their subsequent killing clearly indicates that Pakistan has not stopped pushing ultras. The Army had also flown in a group of mediapersons in an Air Force helicopter to Rajouri yesterday afternoon to show them the bodies of the terrorists.

"There is conclusive involvement of Pakistan in aiding and abetting infiltration in this region after Gen Musharraf's speech thus contradicting his well-publicised stand of denouncing and

He told mediapersons that five terrorists were intercepted by a patrol party near Nagoon Heights at 6 p.m. the previous evening. The group was chal-

112 J. D. B. McLeish SFJ
nged and asked to surrender. However, they fired on the security forces. In the ensuing retaliatory fire, one terrorist was killed in the night. "Early in the

that the militants had infiltrated into Indian territory just the previous night.

The killing of these five terrorists after Gen Musharraf's speech on 12 January proves that Pakistan is not sincere in its promises that were made by its military ruler, the brigadier said.

"There is a great deal of duplicity. They speak something and do something," he said adding Pakistan, has in no way, stopped aiding and abetting infiltration into J&K.

Pakistani troops today resorted to heavy shelling in J&K's Rajouri and Poonch districts causing damage to civilian property, but there was no loss of life, a defence spokesman said in Jammu.

Five people, including a special police officer and a constable of the state Intelligence, were killed while security forces averted a tragedy in the Kashmir valley overnight, UNI adds from Srinagar. Four

people, including three children, were killed and five injured when unidentified militants triggered an IED at the local bus stand in Reasi district this evening, about 80 km from Jammu.



Bodies of the five militants killed. — AP/PTI

morning, we killed another two of them when they tried to break our cordon. Soon after at 7 a.m. we killed the remaining two," said the brigadier.

There were many indications

THE STATESMAN

1 FEB 2001

Killing minefields claim

Army's own men

Srinjoy Chowdhury in New Delhi

Jan. 30. — The Indian Army has suffered serious losses in land-mine explosions since the deployment on the India-Pakistan International Border and the Line of Control began a month ago.

One officer, seven junior commissioned officers and 44 jawans were killed in the blasts and about 80 others, including one officer, injured. The casualties took place while the mines were being laid and also later. Inadequate training and faulty mine fuses have been blamed. There have been a number of accidents as well, a top official said. In one case, a dog tripped a wire leading to the explosion of a fragmentation anti-personnel mine. A young officer, hit in the back, died.

Largely, two kinds of anti-personnel mines were laid — blast and fragmentation mines. The latter releases shards of metal with great force. Anyone within 30 metres is likely to be virtually shredded.

Approximately 350-400 mines, anti-personnel and anti-tank, per square km have been laid along the border, from Gujarat to Jammu and Kashmir. Clearly, lakhs and lakhs of mines have been laid.

Minefields are considered defensive measures; troops are usually deployed behind them during war. It makes the enemy's task of entering Indian territory more difficult as it has to negotiate the minefields first and then attack dug-in forces. Some anti-personnel mines cannot be detected by mine-detectors as they lack metal elements in them. India has signed an international treaty that disallows such mines in four-five years, but many have been laid recently. Officials have detailed maps of such mine-laying. In some cases, mines have been laid in the fields of local villagers who are being compensated. Mines can also help to check infiltration of militants.

Anti-tank mine blasts are considered especially dangerous as they are much more powerful. A tank — weighing 40 tons or so — has to be disabled.

THE STATESMAN

31 JAN 2002

Revealed: Aftab's terror plans and how criminals are using militant networks

Kill Kalam, kidnap Sachin & Sourav

HT-1 20/1 9. 0 3 R d...
 20/1

Neeta Sharma
 New Delhi, January 29

INVESTIGATIONS BY the Crime Branch of the Delhi Police have revealed that members of the ISI-backed Aftab Ansari group — which claimed responsibility for the attack on the American Center in Kolkata — had planned a series of high-profile kidnappings, murders and terror strikes in India.

On the hit-list were such people as former scientific adviser to the Prime Minister A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, cricketers Sourav Ganguly and Sachin Tendulkar. According to a Crime Branch note (a copy of which is with *Hindustan Times*) Ansari had plotted to assassinate Kalam four months ago when he was in Bihar. Hitmen had shadowed Kalam, but had to abort the plan because they couldn't acquire enough weapons in time. Ansari's plan for Tendulkar

was straightforward: kidnap the batting legend for ransom. But he wanted Ganguly abducted so that he could trade the Indian cricket captain for the release of Mohammad Amir Khan, a Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) terrorist who is in Tihar jail.

The Crime Branch note is dated January 23, but was evidently prepared the day before (when the American Center attack took place). Delhi Police's information was shared with the Kolkata Police and clearly taken seriously; security was beefed up around Sourav Ganguly's South Kolkata home by the evening of January 22.

Although Ansari operates out of Dubai, the Crime Branch note says he is currently in Islamabad's Qasim Bazar area. It also talks about his connections with several terrorists. These links were forged primarily in Delhi's Tihar jail where Ansari was an inmate (till he got — and jumped

ON THE HIT LIST



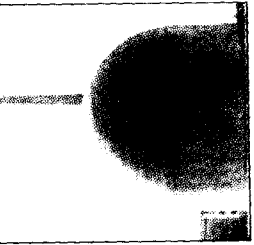
A.P.J. ABDUL KALAM
 Ansari plotted to assassinate the man behind India's missile development programme.



SOURAV GANGULY
 Ansari planned to kidnap him in order to secure the release of a Lashkar terrorist.



SACHIN TENDULKAR
 To raise funds for his group, Ansari planned to kidnap the Indian star batsman.



BARC, TROMBAY
 The Ansari group planned a massive attack on the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre.

Burman and was killed in an encounter in Gujarat, went to Pakistan to renew contacts with several terror groups and assured them help in anti-India activities. The pact was limited to mutual cooperation — the two refused to bring their activities under terrorist control.

The foreign terror groups and the ISI could hardly have asked for anything better. Ansari's criminal network could turn out to be an excellent cover, they reckoned. Having got the go-ahead from Pakistan, Ansari sent several youths for training to LeT camps. He also established a large network of hide-outs and operatives in India.

In fact, the Delhi Police shared information about the Hazaribag hideout with the Jharkhand police on January 22, and the joint operation that saw two of Ansari's men killed on Monday in the Bihar town was planned days in advance.

Other associates

Abdul alias Abdullah

Age: 32
 He used to arrange hideouts for Pakistanis in Kolkata. Sent criminals for training to Pakistan. Close to Ansari

Kamaal

Age: 33
 Belongs to Lahore and was trained by the Lashkar. He is currently staying in Dhaka. Suspected to be involved in planting a bomb to kill former Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina

Sikandar

Age: 26
 Pak-trained terrorist of the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba

Jamshed alias Abdullah

Age: 26
 Pak-trained terrorist of the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba

American Center attackers were Lashkar militants, say police

Times News Network
HAZARIBAGH/NEW DELHI: Kolkata police deputy commissioner Soumen Mitra on Tuesday said the two terrorists killed in Monday's encounter at Hazaribagh were members of the Pakistan-based militant outfit Lashkar-e-Toiba. Mr Mitra, who is heading the special team investigating the case, confirmed that the two were involved in the Kolkata American Center attack.

Mr Mitra told the Times News Network that one of the terrorists, Mohammed Idris alias Zahid, could be identified because of a deformity in his left leg. The identification mark tallied with the information the Kolkata police had on Idris.

Denying that the death of the two men would affect the probe into the Kolkata shootout, he said Idris' dying declaration would in fact help the probe considerably as it had been proved that they were connected to the Lashkar-e-Toiba. He added that Idris' declaration had also tallied with the statement of an eye-witness in Kolkata. Besides, a Howrah-Gaya railway ticket dated January 23 has been

recovered, confirming their involvement in the Kolkata attack," he said.

Another significant piece of information gathered by the police in the process of their probe was that the terrorists were part of the team that had abducted Kolkata shoe magnate Partho Pratik Roy Burman. The papers seized by the police revealed that the entire

details on the extremists, Mr Mitra said his department was exchanging information with its Kolkata and Delhi counterparts, and combined efforts were on to arrest those involved in the American Center shootout.

Earlier, M.S. Upadhye, DCP (crime), told this newspaper that the terrorists might have entered India either through Nepal or Bangladesh. According to him, the extremists had got acquainted with the locals after posing as businessmen and leather goods wholesalers.

At New Delhi, Intelligence Bureau officials on Monday said the killing of the two terrorists in Hazaribagh was the end result of a probe being carried out since October into the activities of several criminals working for the ISI and having links with outfits like the Jaish-e-Mohammad and the Harkat-ul-Jehad-e-Islami.

Intelligence reports have revealed that two of the terrorists involved in the Kolkata shootout, Mohammed Idris and Ibrahim Shah, had secured their driving licences from Biharsharif.

TAKING ON TERROR

- Terrorist's dying declaration will help probe: police
- IB claims credit for providing leads
- Kolkata killers got driving licences at Biharsharif

operation had been directed from Dubai and Pakistan at the instance of Aftab Ahmed Ansari.

Mr Mitra also claimed that the police had information that besides the two men who had been gunned down, four others were in Hazaribagh but had managed to escape just before Monday's operation. He said a hunt was on to nab them. Declining to give any more

Hazaribagh:

(Continued from page 1)

The CID has confirmed that Idris shot at Mr Partha Roy Burman before abducting him. The sketch of the man who attacked Burman is identical with Idris's face, photographed after his death in yesterday's encounter.

Investigators said the motorcycle used in last Tuesday's incident had a fake number plate at the time of the attack. From Intelligence reports, they identified the owner of the motorcycle and detained him.

It was learnt that the chief secretary had reportedly asked the commissioner of police to take "action" against the seven constables who took shelter inside the police van instead of firing back. However, no action has been taken because it

might affect the morale of the force.

Mr Banibrata Basu, DC (headquarters), said: "Kolkata Police is carrying out special operations to identify the modus operandi of militant outfits." They are forming "loose groups" to execute their plans.

According to IB officials, terrorists who fired at policemen outside the American Center were in touch with people who are termed as "contact men."

The IB has sent a report to the Centre highlighting the modus operandi of these groups. It has also identified some of these groups, named as Sadakat and Action Group. Sometimes the members disband to function as individuals. According to Intelligence reports, the network of those who run these groups is based in Metiabruz, Topsia and Kidderpore.

THE STATESMAN

30 JAN 2002

'IDRIS AND SALIM BELONGED TO LASHKAR'

Six ultras were holed up in Hazaribagh: IB

Statesman News Service

KOLKATA/PATNA, Jan. 29. — Six militants, including the city contact man of those who struck in front of the American Center, were holed up inside a house in Hazaribagh before police cordoned it off, the Central Intelligence Bureau said. Four of them fled while two were killed in yesterday's encounter.

In its report, the IB has informed the state government about the presence of six militants.

In Hazaribagh, the DC-DD, Kolkata Police, Mr Soumen Mitra, who is heading the special investigation team, today confirmed that four terrorists had fled to Nalanda. Apart from the unidentified contact man, the ultras included Md Sadaquat, who drove the motorcycle during the attack, and two of his associates.

The Hazaribagh SP, Mr DP Verma, said two teams had been formed to arrest Sadaquat.

The two Pakistani terrorists, killed in the encounter with the police in Hazaribagh yesterday, were associated with Lashkar-e-Taiyaba, Mr Mitra said.

The DC-DD said Idris's dying declaration had established his link with Lashkar. The declaration tallied with eye-witness accounts of the attack outside the American Center. Even the

identification marks tallied with the information in possession of Kolkata Police.

He said the identity of Idris's accomplice, Salim, has not been

Afroz remand extended

MUMBAI, Jan. 29. — Mumbai's additional chief metropolitan magistrate Mr VP Tavate today extended the remand of Al-Qaida suspect Mohammed Afroz Abdul Razak till 12 February.

He was produced before the magistrate amid tight security. Afroz did not plead for bail nor was he interested in engaging a lawyer. — SNS

fully established, but it was evident that he also belonged to Lashkar-e-Taiyaba.

Idris's death would not hamper investigation and his statement will facilitate the inquiry, he added. He said the terrorists had links with Nalanda-based criminals. "They couldn't have stayed in Bihar and Jharkhand without their support." The seizure of a Howrah-Gaya train ticket dated 23 January confirmed their involvement.

Police have already identified the dead as Idris, alias Zaheed, who was Sadaquat's pillion rider

and the actual shooter on Tuesday, and Salim, their associate.

On the day of the incident, Idris and Sadaquat drove their motorcycle from the American Center to the Shakespeare Sarani-AJC Bose Road crossing where two of their local contact men waited with a Maruti Zen.

The two terrorists boarded the car and were driven away to an unknown hideout in the city by one of the contact men. The other person sped away with the motorcycle. He accompanied them out of the city from Howrah station next morning.

The IB report to the state government says that this contact man was present at the Hazaribagh house yesterday along with Idris, Sadaquat and three of their associates, including Salim, who died in the encounter.

The report says Idris, Sadaquat, Salim and two others were Pakistani nationals while the contact man was from the city.

The IB has also given the police detailed information about the identities of the two contact men — the one present in Hazaribagh and the other who drove the assailants from the Shakespeare Sarani-AJC Bose Road crossing. At Lalbazar this evening, senior police officers were tight-lipped about the details of the report.

Turn to page 3

THE STATESMAN

5 0 JAN 30

TERRORIST MODULE SMASHED IN JHARKHAND

Two Pakistanis involved in Kolkata attack killed

By Our Special Correspondent *HD-1*

NEW DELHI, JAN. 28. Nearly a week after the shooting outside the American Center in Kolkata, in which four policemen were killed and 20 people injured, the Centre today claimed that a Pakistan-inspired terrorist module has been smashed in Hazaribagh in Jharkhand and two Pakistani nationals killed in a shootout.

Addressing a press conference here, the Union Home Secretary, Kamal Pande, said the Jharkhand police raided a hideout at dawn today and in the shootout that followed the two — Mohammed Zahid alias Mohammed Idris and Salim — were seriously injured. Mr. Pande said that Zahid, in a statement, admitted that he was a resident of Khanewala district in Multan, Pakistan, and had opened fire at the policemen guarding the American Center. Salim also hailed from Pakistan. Both of them died at hospital, he said.

9-08 N Security
“Further investigations are being carried out but there is hardly any doubt now about the role of Pakistani nationals and Pak.-based terrorist ‘tanzeems’, in this case,” Mr. Pande said.

The Home Secretary said a new trend was emerging in terms of the direct involvement of Pakistani nationals in terrorist, espionage and subversive activities in India.

Apart from the December 13 terrorist strike at the Parliament House, there have been at least five cases of subversion and espionage in recent months in which Pakistani nationals were arrested in the country, Mr. Pande said. Those arrested admitted during interrogation that they had been sent to India for sabotage and terrorism at the behest of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence, he said.

Putting together the sequence of events after the January 22 incident, Mr. Pande said the Dubai-based criminal, Farhan Malik alias Aftab Ahmed Ansari, had called up the police and two newspaper offices in Kolkata within a few hours of the shooting and claimed responsibility. It also became known that Farhan Malik operated the terrorist module in conjunction with the Harkat-ul-Jihad Islami (HUJI) and the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), two Pak.-based terrorist outfits. “Hardly anybody had seen the assailants letting loose a volley of shots early in the morning. The closed circuit camera footage, provided by the American Center, was also of little use,” he said.

Intelligence agencies, police and security agencies of various States had been alerted after the attack and were on the lookout for clues and leads. Intelligence input from police and other agencies indicated the presence of the terrorist module and hideout being run by Farhan Malik. Responding to queries, Mr. Pande said that the Ministry of External Affairs was in touch with the authorities in United Arab Emirates after an Interpol red corner notice was issued against Farhan Malik on January 25.

The Home Ministry would keep a watch on Pakistani nationals overstaying in India. Mr. Pande said that Pakistani nationals had been arrested recently from Jaipur, Jodhpur, Hyderabad and Siliguri and all of them were suspected to have been involved in activities detrimental to the country's interests. “This is a new trend. Earlier, Indian agents were used for such activities but now Pakistan is sending its own nationals here,” he said.

K. Balchand reports from Hazaribagh:

Police laid siege to the house where the two terrorists had taken shelter and cordoned off the area. The two refused to surrender and, under the cover of fire, tried to sneak out through the backdoor. But snipers foiled their attempt to escape.



The body of Mohammad Idris, who was killed in an encounter with police at Chirgaon village, Hazaribagh district, on Monday. — PTI

According to the North Chotanagpur range DIG, A.K. Sinha, Zahid was in possession of the assault rifle he used in the Kolkata incident.

Police also found a railway ticket which Zahid used to travel from Howrah to Gaya in Bihar on January 23, a day after the incident.

According to Mr. Sinha, the two were staying at the hired house for over four months and had also procured a consumer card of a gas agency in Hazaribagh and a Maruti Zen car with a West Bengal registration number.

The DIG did not rule out the possibility of the involvement of more terrorists with ISI links in the Kolkata incident.

Two held

The Nalanda police arrested two more persons in connection with the issuance of a fake passport to Farhan Malik.

The Nalanda SP, Amit Lodha, questioned the then DSP, Z. Ahmed, on the basis of the statement of a retired sub-inspector, Ram Raj Ram, who was taken into custody on Sunday.

Those arrested today were a lawyer, D. Singh, who filed the affidavit, and the Notary Public Officer, Suresh Prasad.

29 JAN 2002

G-10
25/11

Trial by Agni

Q. D. J. M. + C. S. B. S.

The successful test-firing of a new variant of Agni — one with a range of 700 km — is, on the face of it, meant to fill the medium-range slot in India's missile programme. Apart from Prithvi (range: 150-250 km), India had so far focused on intermediate range Agni missiles with a reach of 1,500 km and more. Having said that, it is important to stress that between a single successful test of a particular class of missiles and its operationalisation as an effective weapon of war, there is a substantial time-lag, particularly in India. One has only to look at the history of development of the intermediate Agni missile, starting in the early 1990s. From the first launch powered by semi-liquid fuel, it took almost eight years of research and testing for the prototype to be finalised last year. And even today, the intermediate range missile has yet to be operationally integrated, except perhaps to a marginal extent. So whatever the medium-term significance of the latest salvo, it has no relevance whatever for the current military stand-off at the Western border. Therefore, Pakistan's appeal to the international community "to take note of this Indian behaviour which is prejudicial to the pursuit of stability in our region" is almost wholly aimed at making diplomatic capital out of what is for its neighbour a feel-good non-event. Something of this reality-check was factored into secretary of state Colin Powell's response that the test would not "inflame the (border) situation particularly".

Yet it would be naive to look at the test in purely strategic terms. There was no doubt an important element of timing and symbolism involved in the decision. One cannot take too seriously the defence ministry's disarming gloss that "no political pressure or statement" need be read into the scheduled test. Even assuming that the test had to be postponed in December because of the terrorist strike on Parliament, the timing remains crucial. India's missile defence is not simply a technical or scientific matter, it is a strategic, military initiative in which calculations of political gain and diplomatic fallout are important inputs. Here there are two aspects. First, there is a domestic context in which the ruling coalition or its leading constituent, the BJP, is fighting a back-to-the-wall battle for political survival not just in UP but also, depending on the outcome of the polls, at the Centre. It does the party's chances no harm to try and reclaim lost nationalist high ground by being seen to be resolute in the face of adverse international opinion. Secondly, is international opinion or, more significantly, the US really as agitated about the test as it first seems? Could it be that the test is only the latest in a tacit gameplan in which the US allows India to exert pressure on Pakistan by way of military muscle-flexing even as it keeps, in public, a critical distance from New Delhi's wargames? Whether this is wish-fulfilment or hard-headed analysis, there is no denying that Washington's response has been rather more muted than might have been warranted by circumstance. But cheer-leaders should exercise caution rather than rejoice at this unlikely behind-the-scenes intrigue. After all, the record of American involvement in South Asia is less one of fidelity and friendship and more a menage a trois centred around its own interests and pleasures.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

29 JAN 2002

Militant Confesses To Involvement In American Center Shootout Before Dying

Pak terrorists linked to city attack killed

Hazaribagh (Jharkhand)

28 JANUARY

IN A breakthrough in the Kolkata terrorist attack, two Pakistani nationals involved in it were shot dead in a fierce encounter with the police in a predominantly Muslim area here on Monday morning.

Those killed were identified as Mohammed Idris alias Mohammed Zaheed of Khanawal in Multan in Punjab province and Salim, also from the same province, DIG (north Chotanagpur range), A.K. Sinha told a press conference here.

Home secretary Kamal Pande told reporters in New Delhi that the two were shot dead in an early morning raid on a "terrorist hideout." While the DIG said one of the killed was involved in the Kolkata attack, Mr Pande said Idris, who succumbed to injuries in the hospital, confessed to involvement in the shooting at the American Center on January 22 that left four policemen dead and over 17 injured. Mr Pande said a pin-pointed lead came about the presence of a terrorist module and its hideout in Hazaribagh being run by Dubai-based underworld don Farhan Malik alias Aftab Ahmed Ansari who has claimed responsibility for the Kolkata shooting.

He said investigations revealed that Malik operated his terrorist module in conjunction with Harkat-ul-Jihad e Islami (Hujei) and Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), two Pakistan-based militant outfits.

Mr Sinha said a joint team of Delhi and Hazaribagh police raid-



SUDDEN IMPACT: The dead body of Md Idris at Chirgaon village in Hazaribagh early on Monday. — PTI

ed the hideout on Hhan Road at 2:30 am following a tip-off and asked the militants to give themselves up but they refused.

At 6:30 am, the duo tried to sneak out of the house after opening a volley of fire and in the ensuing encounter Salim was shot dead on the spot while Idris was critically wounded and later died at the Sadar hospital, the DIG, who addressed the press conference jointly with Hazaribagh police superintendent Dipak Verma and assistant commissioner of Delhi Police Ravishanker, said.

In his dying declaration before the police, Idris admitted to having shot dead four policemen at the

American Center in Kolkata, police officials said. Idris also confessed that he was riding pillion and had opened fire on the security post at the American Center from an AK-47 rifle, the officials said, adding that his accomplice, Sadaqat, who steered the motorbike, was still at large. The rifle was recovered by the police after Monday's encounter. The police also recovered 43 cartridges, one railway ticket in the name of Idris from Howrah to Gaya, dated January 23, a day after the attack, a consumer card of a gas agency of Hazaribagh, a Maruti Zen bearing number plate WB-12 a 5703, besides Rs 22,200 in cash from the site. — PTI

Was it possible to get them live?

Our Political Bureau
NEW DELHI 28 JANUARY

WOULD IT have been possible for the police to capture alive at least one of the Pakistani nationals, allegedly involved in the Kolkata terrorist attack, who were shot dead on Monday morning in Hazaribagh? The encounter at Hazaribagh has brought to fore this dimension of defining the response of the police to crisis situations that they will have to increasingly face in the fight against terrorism. It is expected to increase concern in the government over whether

ACTION PAK-ED

raiding police teams are really equipped to handle such circumstances in which spraying bullets to kill as a reply to fire from the other side should not be the only option. Without minimising the bravery exhibited by security forces, the Hazaribagh incident only mirrors other similar cases where the police have exercised this option fully without probably considering if anyone can be captured alive. This was as much apparent in Parliament shootout where available video footages show that security forces shot to kill and there was never any effort to even try and

maim at least one of the perpetrators.

Given the mine of information which the slain terrorists could have provided, bosses in the Union home ministry would most certainly have been much happier if in today's incident one of the militants was caught. The government's case would inarguably be strengthened if it was able to produce one of the alleged perpetrators in support of its charge.

Veterans of police encounters, however, argue that there is little scope of capturing someone alive

in such a situation. They contend that there is a vast chasm between theoretical assessments and a realtime situation. In fact, it was pointed out that one of the terrorists in the Hazaribagh shootout was only injured when he was apprehended, but later succumbed in the hospital after making a confessional statement. Reports from Hazaribagh have indicated that the two terrorists, identified as Mohammed Idris and Salim, both from Multan in Punjab province of Pakistan, had been given ample opportunity to surrender. However, after they responded with fire, the raiding team had no option but to retaliate.

The Economic Times

29 JAN 2002

FD-1
28/11

CCS reviews border situation

J. D. & N. S. S. S.

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JAN. 27. The Cabinet Committee on Security met here today to review the overall situation in the context of the build-up of the military on both sides of the border with Pakistan.

The internal security situation was also reviewed in the context of the threat of terrorist strikes.

Besides, the Prime Minister, who chaired the meeting, the Home Minister, L.K. Advani, the External Affairs Minister, Jas-

want Singh, and the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, attended the meeting.

Earlier, when the Prime Minister received a VHP-led delegation of 'sants' on the Ayodhya issue, it is learnt that it was told that the "chetavani (warning) yatra" of the 'sants' was particularly bad as it had "naturally" got associated with the Uttar Pradesh elections, and also because there was tension on the border and threats of terrorist strikes.

However, it was also felt that

the 'yatra' had passed off peacefully and had not added to the headaches of the Government from the point of view of law and order.

At a time when the Government focus was on India-Pakistan relations and the fight against terrorism, the raising of the Ayodhya issue by the 'sants' was not welcome, Government sources indicated.

The temple agitation was not the best way to improve internal security.

Efforts were also being made to present the Government's decision to refer to the Law Minister the Vishwa Hindu Parishad demand for the handing over of acquired land in Ayodhya to the trust run by it as nothing more than offering "to examine" the demand.

At this juncture, the Government would do nothing but to uphold the rule of law and the Constitution.

And the urgent task before the Government was to tackle terrorism, the CCS noted.

THE HINDU

28 JAN 2002

ISI sets up training camps in Bangladesh

Jaideep Mazumdar
Kolkata, January 25

WHILE NEW Delhi has focused its attention on terrorist training camps in Pakistan, in the last year at least 18 camps have sprung up near the international boundary within Bangladesh where Islamic terrorists from three major groups are trained and sent over to India.

But the camps — run by Harkat-ul Jehadi-e-Islami, Sipahi-e-Mohammad, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and Ahle Haadis — are not under Dhaka's patronage. Pakistan's ISI, which has a major presence in Bangladesh, has facilitated the setting up of these camps. Thirteen of these camps are in Bangladesh's Rajshahi division and the remaining five in the northern Khulna. All these camps are within 10 km of the boundary bordering West Bengal.

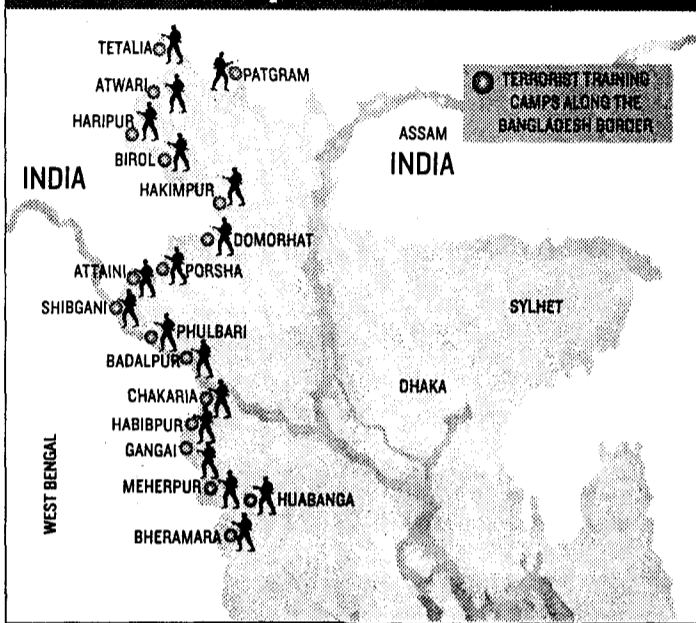
The camps are located near small, nondescript villages and are mostly on the premises of madrasas and mosques. In Rajshahi, the camps are located near Patgram (bordering Cooch Behar), Tetalia (near the border with Darjeeling district), Atwari and Hariapur (along the North Dinajpur border), Birol, Hakimpur and Dhomorhat (along South Dinajpur) and Porsha, Attaini, Shibganj, Phulbari, Badalpur and Chakaria (along Murshidabad). In the Khulna division, the camps are located near Habibpur, Gangai, Meherpur, Huadanga and Bheramara — all along Nadia.

Indian Intelligence officials have been able to ascertain the specific locations of 11 of these camps — five in Khulna Division and six in Rajshahi division. "That's because in Rajshahi division, many of the camps are located in the char areas... We are trying to obtain the exact locations of the rest. We have the rough locations and the rest should not prove to be very difficult," an official said.

At least eight of the camps — the ones near Patgram, Atwari, Birol, Hakimpur, Attaini, Chakaria, Habibpur and Bheramara — are located within the boundaries or just adjacent to mosques and madrasas. All the institutions are new and funded by money sent from Gulf countries.

Over 200 men and boys, some as

Terror camps across the border



'Harkat, Reza coordinated strike'

THE ATTACK on American Center, Intelligence officials say, was most likely coordinated between a couple of Harkat-ul-Jehadi-e-Islami (HuJI) terrorists, the new Asif Reza Commando Force and their local contacts in Kolkata.

The Commando Force, one of the two groups that claimed responsibility for the strike, was raised some time in the third week of December, probably at a village of illegal migrants from Bangladesh along the Indo-Bangladesh border in Malda.

The Force is said to be an adjunct of HuJI, which has very close links with the ISI. "We have received news of a gathering of HuJI leaders at Nasimpurhat village, about 15 km from Habibpur town," a senior Central Intelligence officer. Saiful Islam is the

leader of the new outfit.

It's believed that HuJI leaders sneaked into Malda through Bangladesh. They met some maulvis and activists of the banned Simi and others and floated the idea of forming an affiliate of the HuJI.

The idea behind floating an affiliate makes logistical sense. Affiliates work closely with the parent organisation, but do not stretch the latter's resources. The affiliate survives on its own and renders vital help," said the officer. The affiliates are often absorbed into the main groups over a period of time. Intelligence officers estimate the strength of this new group to be in the range of 45 to 50, of whom 80 per cent are locals.

HTC, Kolkata

young as 14 years old, have been trained at these camps. Most have sneaked into West Bengal, some suspected through the Siliguri corridor to cross over to Nepal.

The ISI and the Islamic terror groups in Bangladesh are backed

by a section of the Bangladeshi establishment, especially senior officers of the army and its paramilitary forces, the Bangladesh Rifles and the Bangladesh Ansars which operate outside the control of the powers-that-be in Dhaka.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

26 JAN 2002

9.05 A. ...

India rules out border pullout

New Delhi, January 25

HOME MINISTER L K Advani today ruled out any immediate military de-escalation along the Indo-Pak border and said it would take a "couple of months" for India to judge whether there is any reduction in Pakistan-sponsored cross-border terrorism.

"These are matters on which a formal decision is taken by the Government. At the moment the present situation (on the border) will continue," he told a press conference when asked if de-escalation could also take a couple of months.

Government, he said, would require a couple of months to judge whether there was any let-up in cross-border terrorism with Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf having pledged to combat the menace in his January 12 address to the nation.

On the list of 20 wanted terrorists and criminals given by India to Pakistan, the home minister said New Delhi has not set any time-frame for their deportation.

"Pakistan Government will agree with the request of the Government of India" since Islamabad has declared to fight terrorism, he said adding he also hoped that Islamabad would not provide asylum to any terrorist.

Advani replied in the negative when asked whether the visit of US ambassador Robert Blackwill to the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir

amounted to accepting Washington's mediation to resolve the Kashmir issue. "During the last three to four years, Government has allowed many ambassadors to visit Kashmir but that does not mean we have agreed to mediation on it," he said.

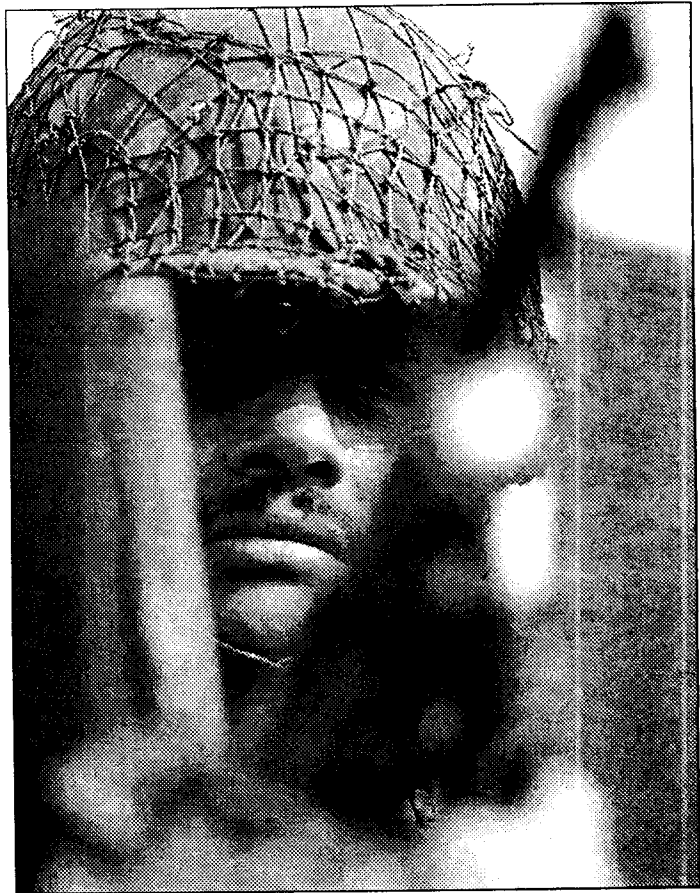
To a question about links between international organised crime and international terrorism, Advani said it had been seen after the 1993 Mumbai riots that criminal gangs had been used by Pakistan for cross-border terrorism in India.

He replied in the affirmative when asked whether Government proposed to re-introduce in Parliament the prevention of terrorism ordinance (Poto), which was blocked by the Opposition during the winter session.

Pak stand: Pakistan today indicated it would consider taking further measures in addition to those already mentioned by President Pervez Musharraf, to help in de-escalation and start dialogue with India.

Speaking after holding talks with Canadian deputy prime minister John Manley, Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar said, "We will consider very seriously Canada's ideas and impressions and we see what we can do in addition to what the President Musharraf had already done to promote that objective of de-escalation and dialogue."

Pakistan would keep trying for peace and de-escalation



AFP PHOTO

A BSF jawan keeps vigil from an armoured vehicle in Srinagar on Friday.

INDIAN SPY PLANE CRASHES NEAR BORDER

AN UNMANNED aerial reconnaissance vehicle of the Indian Air Force crashed near a village in Bikaner, Rajasthan, after developing a snag, police said here on Friday. "There were no casualties as the spy drone, which took off at 9 pm yesterday, crashed near Madhodiggi, about 60 km from the border with Pakistan", they said. However, IAF has refuted the claim that the spy drone acquired from Israel had crashed and said the UAV, which developed technical snag while on a mission near Indo-Pak border, has been safely retrieved.

PTI, Jaipur

between New Delhi and Islamabad, he added. Commenting on his meetings in India, Manley said, "Each of my interlocutory

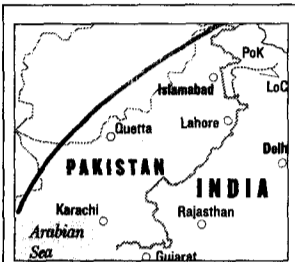
in India made a point saying that they respond very positively to President Musharraf's speech."

PTI

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

26 JAN 2002

Agni test-fire has a note attached



If launched from, say Jaisalmer or Ganganagar, the missile will cover most of Pakistan

Agni statistics

Range: 700 km, can cover most of Pakistan

Propellant: Solid fuel ensures quick launch

Storage: Rail mobile. Won't be prone to pre-emptive strikes

HT Correspondent ^{(11) HGI}
Balasore, January 25

INDIA TODAY test-fired a new, 700-km strike range Agni missile amid international reaction that ranged from alarm in Pakistan, regret in Britain, a studied silence in China to tacit endorsement from Russia.

Pakistan said the test would be "prejudicial" to regional stability and warned India that it would defend any aggression. But it indicated that Islamabad wasn't thinking of a tit-for-tat test.

"We hope the international community will take note of this Indian behaviour, which is prejudicial to the pursuit of stability in our region, especially during the current situation. The test comes at a time of tensions when Indian forces are massed on our borders," the Foreign Office said.

26/1 J-D & N Security
But India played down the event's political and strategic significance. The test, carried out a day ahead of Republic Day, was part of the country's efforts to evaluate its indigenous capability to guarantee a credible minimum nuclear deterrent, a Government spokesperson said after the shorter-range missile was launched at 8.45 am from Wheelers Islands off the Orissa coast.

Prime Minister Vajpayee watered down the test, saying it was part of "several steps" being taken to boost the country's security. He congratulated scientists for the missile's successful launch.

"For the nation's security and protection, we are taking several steps, and Agni is one of them." The decision to test the Agni missile in various configurations was taken earlier. It was an old project unlinked to the post-December 13

border stand-off, Vajpayee said. Home Minister LK Advani too addressed the misgivings in Islamabad, saying there is no reason to "misinterpret" the launch, which had been undertaken in the "normal course of progress" in India's the missile programme.

Foreign Office spokesperson Nirupama Rao, said the missile programme was "non-provocative" and not directed at any specific country. "We do not intend to start an arms race", she said.

But analysts say the test was aimed at telling the world that Delhi meant business and wouldn't back down from its demand that Islamabad end cross-border terrorism.

"It's meant to send signals to foreign and domestic audiences," Bharat Karnad of Centre for Policy Research said.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

26 JAN 2002

Delhi weighs deportation option for red-corner Ansari

OUR BUREAU

Jan. 25: Investigations into Tuesday's Calcutta killings made little headway today beyond continued detentions, the only progress coming in the form of an Interpol red-corner notice against Aftab Ansari, who claimed responsibility for the attack outside the American Center.

Home minister L.K. Advani said today that the Indian gov-

ernment was in touch with the UAE for Ansari's extradition, but there is no certainty that he is still in Dubai, from where he made the dramatic phone call owning responsibility.

The CBI is said to have given the Dubai number to the FBI. Advani said the US agency will have no role in the probe other than sharing intelligence.

With the Interpol notice going out, Ansari will be on the international watch list and

can be arrested by police in whichever country he is hiding. Despite an extradition treaty, Delhi has seldom succeeded in persuading Dubai to hand over criminals.

Keeping this in mind, Advani said India may request Ansari's deportation instead of asking for the long-drawn and slippery process of extradition.

"Extradition is a process while in deportation the concerned government takes a de-

cision," Advani said. Whether to seek deportation or extradition has not yet been decided. It will depend to a great extent on the case prepared by investigators here.

Calcutta police appear to have reached a dead-end with their probe and senior officers were today reluctant to speak, if at all they could be found.

Extradition lawyer Susheel Bajaj explained the difference between deportation and extra-

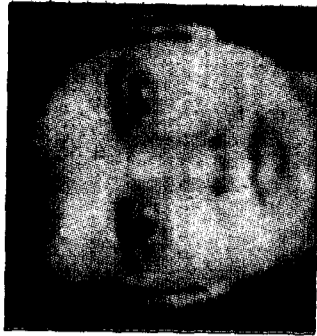
dition. While deportation depends entirely on the government and is the sovereign right of a country, extradition is a request, which is examined by the court and can be stopped by the judge or magistrate even if the administration wants to accept the request of another country.

Usually, a person is not deported as a fugitive, but is requested to leave by the host government for any number of reasons. The deported person

can be sent out of the country by any flight.

Delhi claims that Ansari travelled to Dubai from Pakistan, where he was provided with a false passport by the ISI. In the normal course, he should be deported to Pakistan, but the UAE is free to send him out at its own discretion. The flight could stop in India on its way to Pakistan for police here to lay their hands on Ansari.

■ See Page 11, Metro



Ansari: On watch list

THE TELEGRAPH

26 JAN 2002

AGNI VARIANT CAN STRIKE MOST PAK TARGETS

Protests greet missile test

D. D. N. Security 28/1 5/1

SNS and

BHUBANESWAR/NEW DELHI, Jan. 25. — For all the tension on the border, India went ahead and successfully tested a short-range version of the Agni from a Chandipur test site at 8.45 a.m. today.

The surface-to-surface intermediate range ballistic missile is nuclear-capable and has a range of 700 km or less, meaning it could strike most major targets in Pakistan.

Islamabad said the test was "prejudicial" to the region's stability. "We hope the international community will take note of this Indian behaviour which is prejudicial to the pursuit of stability," the foreign ministry said. It pointed out that the test had been conducted when Indian forces were massed on the border.

In Delhi, defence ministry sources said the missile could carry a 1,000-kg warhead, suggesting it could be a nuclear weapon. The test launch met all the objectives.

The Prime Minister said the test was part of efforts to bolster national security. "For the nation's security and protection, we're taking several steps and Agni is one among them."

(Gen Pervez Musharraf said the ball was now in India's court and it was up to that country to respond positively to Pakistan's efforts to ease tensions, a report from Islamabad says. Peace is in the greater interest of India and Pakistan, he told Army officers. "Pakistan's deterrence, which consists of its quantified force,

capability to cause unacceptable damage to the enemy and our resolve, is in place."

(Pakistan, however, indicated it would consider taking further measures in addition to those mentioned by Gen Musharraf to help de-escalate the tension along the border and start dialogue with India.

(The foreign minister, Mr Abdul Sattar, said: "We'll see what we can do in addition to what President Musharraf had already done...")

New Delhi had informed



A TV image of Agni during the test firing from Wheeler Island, in Orissa, on Friday. — AP/PTI

Pakistan, Russia, Britain, China, France, Germany, Japan, Spain and the USA about the test, but there has been some concern over the timing: the armies of India and Pakistan now stand face-to-face on the border.

Britain, Germany, France and Australia regretted India's decision to conduct the test at a time when the situation along its border with Pakistan was tense. China is yet to make any comment, while Russia said it "understood" India's stand.

The British foreign secretary, Mr Jack Straw, said the test sent "wrong signals within the region and beyond... I urge India and Pakistan to resolve their disputes through diplomatic means."

The USA, too, thinks the test shouldn't have been conducted now, but said it wouldn't "inflare" Indo-Pak tensions.

Foreign ministry officials in Delhi said the timing of the launch was decided on the basis of technical considerations and the missile had no political message to convey. The ministry spokesperson said the launch was planned in advance and conducted in a transparent manner. India's missile programme, she said, was not country-specific. The minister of state for external affairs, Mr Omar Abdullah, said Pakistan shouldn't feel threatened by the test because it was informed in advance.

Mr George Fernandes witnessed the launch from Wheeler Island along with Air Chief Marshal S Krishnaswamy.

Pak soldiers killed

Eight Pakistani soldiers were killed and 10 of their bunkers destroyed after Indian troops retaliated against Pakistani shelling in the Nowshera sector today, a report from Jammu says.

THE STATESMAN

70 JAN 25

Red Corner Notice against Farhan Malik

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JAN. 25. In a positive legal development in the shooting incident outside the American Center in Kolkata, the Interpol has issued a "Red Corner Notice" against Dubai-based criminal Farhan Malik alias Aftab Ansari, who had reportedly claimed responsibility for the attack in which five policemen were killed on early Tuesday.

Disclosing this here today, the Union Home Minister, L.K. Advani, said that he was told of the development by the CBI Director, P.C.Sharma, as the agency represents Interpol in India.

Though Mr. Advani addressed a press conference on the eve of Republic Day for formally releasing a new "Flag Code of India 2002" that allows citizens a liberal use and display of the tricolour, a majority of the queries related to the shooting incident in Kolkata.

Adopting a cautious approach, Mr. Advani said that Home and External Affairs Ministries and other agencies had been pursuing the issue of extradition of Farhan Malik with the United Arab Emirates authorities.

"We are considering what kind of request would be appropriate to make to UAE. Extradition is a process and deportation is a matter where government takes a decision. All these factors are being taken into consideration," he said.

Asked if the Home Ministry was contemplating any action on the Special Secretary's report concerning the Kolkata incident, Mr. Advani said it was a "factual report" based on the views of the West Bengal's Home Secretary, the Kolkata Police Commissioner and other officials of the State Government. "There are certain steps which can be taken in such a situation which can be appropriate in tracking down the criminals involved in the incident. Both State and the Central Governments are working in cooperation so that we are able to track down the criminals. We would also like the police to be equipped with modern weapons," Mr. Advani said.

Responding to a query on the possible role of FBI in the probe into the shooting, he ruled it out saying the FBI had no role to play in investigations in India. "We have agreed upon

exchange of information and intelligence inputs. The video footage of closed circuit TV installed at American Center was made available to our agencies and the police," he said.

Mr. Advani maintained that the incident could be an act of vengeance by criminal gangs but added that Farhan Malik, now based in Dubai, was recruited by Pakistan's ISI and he also had a Pakistani passport. The shooting was followed by two telephone calls Malik made to newspaper offices and to Kolkata police, he added.

Asked if the Kolkata incident would prompt the Centre to push the idea of setting up a federal crime agency, Mr. Advani replied in the negative. "The Chief Ministers have rejected the idea. They are not ready for it though State Police DGs had wanted such an agency," he said.

Asked if there could be de-escalation on the Indo-Pak. border, Mr. Advani said the present situation would continue. "One of the indicators of normal situation would be putting a stop to cross-border terrorism and denying shelter to terrorists in Pakistan," he said.

THE HINDU

25 JAN 2002

26 JAN 2002

'N-power should be equally distributed'

Press Trust of India

SOMEWHERE ON THE ARABIAN SEA, Jan. 24. — The nuclear exchange platform should be equally "distributed" to ensure fool-proof security of the nuclear retaliatory capability, the Navy chief, Admiral Madhavendra Singh, said today, adding that Pakistan was undertaking a maritime movement.

"Nuclear retaliatory power should be evenly distributed and disbursed so that no single strike can spoil it," Admiral Singh told reporters on board INS Viraat after reviewing a "routine" naval exercise in the region. The nuclear strike power should be made "land-based, air-based and also sea-based", he said.

On Pakistani naval movement in the sea, he said they

were "preparing in their own way," but his force was ready for any challenge. However, he said unlike in-land and aerial shellings from across the border, "no such thing has occurred in the sea".

The commissioning of five new ships by 2002 would add to the country's sea-prowess, he said and described government's approval of 30-year submarine building programme as a "watershed" in the annals of country's naval history. He said with major ships set for decommissioning, there was need for replacement especially of aircraft carriers.

Admiral Singh said the Navy would acquire five new ships including two Talwar class frigates from Russia by year end.

He said negotiations were on with Russians for early procurement of Admiral

Groshkov carriers.

Earlier, the Admiral reviewed the mock war game launched by the Navy to test counter effective measures and maritime preparedness of the force. The exercise, which saw participation of warships like INS Viraat, INS Mysore, INS Godavari, and INS Ranvir besides copters and jet fighters, criss-crossed 200 nautical miles stretch creek of the bluewater off Mumbai.

"This is a routine exercise and we even had not given any code name to it," the Navy chief said, adding that he has reviewed and taken stock of the "strengths and weaknesses". He said non-commissioning of any ship during the seventh and eighth Five-Year-Plan had left a vacuum, adding that due to such decisions "you ultimately suffer down the line".

THE STATESMAN

7 5 2000

The European rocket, Ariane-4, carrying Insat-3C, lifts off from Kourou in French Guyana on Thursday. — AP

Insat-3C launched

for D B N Senthil HD-1 25/1
BANGALORE, JAN. 24. In another boost to India's space programme, a third generation communication satellite, Insat-3C, was successfully launched into space today by the European launch vehicle, Ariane-4. This will give a big push to the country's communication services through enhanced telephony and television channels.

Launched from the French Guyanese spaceport of Kourou after a 54-minute delay, Ariane-4 majestically soared into space carrying the 2,750 kg-Insat-3C, its lone occupant on board, and hurtled it into space 21 minutes after the lift-off.

Within half-an-hour after the satellite was injected into a geosynchronous transfer orbit, the Master Control Facility at Hassan in Karnataka took control of the spacecraft and acquired the telemetry signal from it.

The Rs. 250-crore Insat-3C with a designed 12-year mission life, built by the Indian Space Re-

search Organisation (ISRO), would replace aging satellites such as Insat-2C and give an impetus to India's telecommunications, broadcasting, business communication and mobile services.

In a post-launch briefing, an elated Kasturirangan, Chairman of ISRO, said initial evaluation of the performance of the satellite "appears to be satisfactory". ISRO has lined up launch of two more satellites — Insat 3a and Insat 3E — in the next year.

The President, K.R. Narayanan, congratulated ISRO, saying, "The successful launch of Insat-3C is yet another landmark in our path-breaking quest for exploration of space and application of space technology for our national development."

The Prime Minister, A.B. Vajpayee, congratulated scientists, engineers and other associations for the successful launch. — PTL, UNI

THE HINDU

25 JAN 2002

India protested against airlift of Pakistani Taliban: Report

New York, January 24

INDIA HAD protested to the US and Britain over Pakistan's airlifting of its nationals and Taliban fighters after they were cornered in Kunduz during American action in Afghanistan, National Security Adviser Brajesh Mishra was quoted as saying.

Diplomatic notes protesting the airlift were sent to Britain and the United States. Neither responded, investigative journalist Seymour Hersh quoted Mishra as saying in an article in New Yorker magazine.

Mishra said that 5,000 Pakistanis and Taliban were airlifted by Pakistan after the fall of Kunduz, describing it as "a ballpark figure." He was quoted as saying that the Indian Intelligence was convinced that many of the air-

lifted fighters would soon infiltrate into Kashmir. There was a precedent for this. In the past, Pakistani's ISI had trained fighters in Afghanistan and then funnelled them into Kashmir.

Referring to the December 13 Parliament attack, which took place three weeks after the airlift, Mishra said it had resulted in a more significant number of casualties "there would have been mayhem. Nobody in India wants war, but other options are not ruled out," Mishra said.

The article quotes one of India's "senior Intelligence officials" as saying President Pervez "Musharraf can't afford to keep the Taliban in Pakistan. They're dangerous to his own regime. Our reading is that the fighters can go only to Kashmir."

The US had denied reports of airlift

but the article quotes its intelligence officials as saying they indeed took place at Musharraf's instance.

The article says operatives in RAW reported extensively on the Pakistani airlift out of Kunduz. RAW, it says, has excellent access to the Northern Alliance and a sophisticated ability to intercept electronic communications.

An Indian military adviser was quoted as saying that when the airlift began "we knew within minutes."

In interviews in New Delhi, Indian national security and Intelligence officials, it adds, repeatedly declared that the airlift had rescued not only members of the Pakistani military but its citizens who had volunteered to fight against the Northern Alliance, as well as non-Pakistani Taliban and al-Qaida activists.

9-D & N Security

VS

The article quotes RAW's senior analyst for Pakistani and Afghan issues as saying that the most extensive rescue efforts took place on three nights at the time of the fall of Kunduz. Indian Intelligence had concluded that 8,000 or more men were trapped inside the city in the last days of the siege, roughly half of whom were Pakistanis. (Afghans, Uzbeks, Chechens and various Arab mercenaries made up the rest.)

At least five flights were specifically "confirmed" by India's informants, the RAW analyst said, and many more were believed to have taken place.

In India's assessment, the article says, 3,300 prisoners surrendered to a Northern Alliance tribal faction headed by Gen Abdul Rashid Dostum.

A few hundred Taliban were also

turned over to other tribal leaders. That left between 4,000-5,000 men unaccounted for. "Where is the balance?" the Intelligence officer asked, according to the article.

The article quotes the officials as saying that two Pakistani army generals were on the flights. "None of the American Intelligence officials I spoke with were able to say with certainty how many Taliban and al-Qaida fighters were flown to safety, or may have escaped from Kunduz by other means," the writer says.

India, "wary of antagonising the Bush administration" chose not to denounce the airlift at the time. But there was a great deal of anger within the Indian Government.

"We had all the information, but we did not go public," the Indian military

adviser was quoted as saying. "Why should we embarrass you? We should be sensible."

A RAW official, according to the article, said India had intelligence that Musharraf's message to the Americans had been that he didn't want to see body bags coming back to Pakistan. "Musharraf has not done as much as the Indians want," a Bush administration official who is involved in South Asian issues said.

"But he's done more than I'd thought he'd do. He had to do some thing, because the Indians are so wound up."

The official also said, however, that Musharraf could not last in office if he conceded the issue of Kashmir to India and would not want to do so in any case.

Insat-3C launched, will boost telecom services

Times News Network

MUMBAI: India's space sector received a major boost on Thursday with the successful launch of the Insat-3C satellite by an Ariane-4 rocket from the European spaceport of Kourou in French Guyana.

According to the Indian space research organisation (Isro), the 147th flight of Ariane, carrying Isro's 2,750-kg satellite, lifted off at 5.17 a.m. (IST) and was injected into a geo-synchronous transfer orbit 21 minutes later. The satellite, with a 12-year life span, is at present going round the earth with an orbital period of about 10.5 hours.

A multi-purpose space system, the satellite is expected to boost telecommunication services, TV coverage, broadcasting and meteorological facilities in the country. It is the eighth Indian satellite to be carried by an Ariane rocket.

For the scientists gathered in the Jupiter control room at Kourou, especially satellite mission director R.K. Rajangam, it was a nail-biting moment because 11 seconds before the lift-off, the computer temporarily stopped the launch for technical reasons.

The Insat team went through anxious moments hoping that the launch would not be rescheduled. But after a while, the computer gave the 'go' and the rocket carrying the Indian satellite thundered off the launch-pad at 5.17 a.m. It

was originally scheduled to take off at 4.23 a.m. For Mr Rajangam, it was his first Ariane mission.

The Insat master-control facility at Hassan in Karnataka acquired the telemetry signal from the satellite at 5.47 a.m. Initial checks indicated that it was performing satisfactorily.

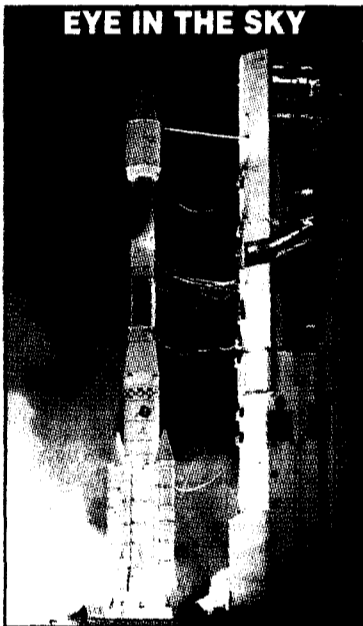
Isro said that first operations were carried out by issuing commands from MCF which is tracking, monitoring and controlling the satellite. During the initial phase, the Hassan centre will seek the help of different ground stations at Beijing, Fuciono (Italy) and Lake Cowichan in Canada. The satellite's orbit is being determined by an array of telemetry, tracking and command stations.

In the coming days, the orbit-raising operations on Insat-3C will be executed until the satellite is parked in its final geo-stationary orbit, about 36,000 km above the equator.

It will be placed next to Insat-1D at 74 degrees east longitude. On nearing the final orbit, two solar panels and two antennae of Insat-3C will be deployed.

Insat-3C is the second satellite to be placed in orbit in the Insat-3 series. The first satellite, Insat-3B, was placed in orbit on March 22, 2000.

According to Arianespace, Isro's ninth satellite, Insat-3A, is scheduled to go into orbit later this year, followed by Insat-3E in 2003.



Carrying the Insat-3C satellite, an Ariane-4 rocket lifts off from its launching pad in Kourou, French Guyana, on Wednesday.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 2002

H9-8

A COUNTER-TERROR CONSENSUS

THE GRUESOME ATTACK on the Indian security personnel guarding the American Center in Kolkata has once again exposed the vulnerabilities of civilised and democratic societies in the present phase of globalised violence. The Union Home Minister, L. K. Advani, is of the view that a group linked to Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence was responsible for Tuesday's drive-by gun-attack outside the American Center. However, the investigative agencies in Kolkata have not yet conclusively assigned blame for the shooting incident in which four policemen were killed and 20 others injured. Pakistan, on its part, has rejected Mr. Advani's assertion, while the United States is eager to avoid a firm judgment at this early stage of the investigation. In a sense, the assailants' choice of their targets as also of the venue for the crime itself seemed to support the suspicions that the event might betray a form of political terrorism. Yet, the U.S., which has thanked the Indian authorities for protecting its facilities and personnel, is keen to weigh all the evidence that could be gathered before determining whether the crime was indeed an act of terrorism against America and its worldwide interests. Washington's anxieties in this regard were fully reflected by the manner in which the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, spoke to both the External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, and the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf. With a U.S. spokesman clearly indicating that Gen. Powell's conversation with Gen. Musharraf might not have been related to the shooting in Kolkata at all, the overall message from Washington is that it will remain deeply cognisant of its sensitive tie-up with Islamabad in the present circumstances. At the same time and on a different plane, this reality does not preclude the prospects of a U.S.-India consensus on counter-terror issues for the long-term global battle against the politics of terror.

The shooting incident in Kolkata coincided with the fourth meeting of the U.S.-India Joint Working Group on counter-terror issues. But the discussions had more to do with the bilateral search for a new idiom of anti-terror political will and a suitable action plan. As two seriously engaged democracies, India and the U.S. seem to share a broad world view on how to counter the globalised terror. Nevertheless, the two are yet to strike a definitive common denominator of cooperation, if only because they do not at this stage possess complementary skills of similar relevance to both sides. On balance, India's requirement of American expertise and sophisticated devices is in greater focus. To be seen in this context is the current visit to New Delhi by the Director of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, Robert Mueller, in connection with the probe of an Indian Airlines' plane hijack with international ramifications for the present drive against globalised terror. The parallel visit to New Delhi by the head of the U.S. Defence Intelligence Agency, Thomas Wilson, is also a sign of new American gesture of cooperation with India.

The joint statement on the latest meeting of the U.S.-India panel on counter-terrorism fully reflects a shared sentiment about ways to make common cause. Also agreed to are some specifics of cooperation in regard to intelligence-gathering and exchange of information. Certain other aspects of terror-control such as those relating to immigration and the cyberspace traffic figure in some detail. Recognising that funds constitute the sinews of the terrorists, too, India and the U.S. have pledged joint action to bring about a financial squeeze. Above all, a matter of particular interest to India is the accord on a U.S.-aided "pilot project", apparently involving the use of sensors, to address New Delhi's concerns of cross-border terrorism. Will this be a litmus test of the U.S.' political will to help India?

THE HINDU

JAN 24 2002

A General and a Minister

By Harish Khare

The fraudulent 'deshbhakts' who preside over New Delhi ought to be slowed down in their heedless quest for making India into a garrison state.

119-8
281

IN THREE days' time the nation will observe the grandest republican rite. Many voices have often thoughtlessly suggested doing away with the traditional Republic Day Parade. But we need to remember that this ceremony is as much a salute to the republic as a ritualistic reaffirmation of the civilian supremacy over the armed forces. The President of India, who is the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces, "takes" the salute at Rajpath on January 26.

Because this year the Republic Day parade ritual is being observed in the backdrop of a noisy stand-off with Pakistan, the raging silent controversy over the civilian-Army relationship has gone largely unheard. A few days ago the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, had deemed it necessary to assert — that too on foreign soil — that the Indian defence forces were a disciplined lot. And it may just be a coincidence that that very day an officer of the rank of a Lt. General was relieved of his command for over-reaction, an euphemism for stepping out of line in a manner that was unacceptable.

But this is small change compared to the unabated anger and unalloyed disappointment over the public rebuke that was administered to S. Padmanabhan, Chief of the Army Staff, by the Defence Minister on January 11. That evening the "Chief" had addressed a press conference; someone took the decision that the event be permitted to be televised live. This was perhaps the first time the country watched a General perform. And he came across as a blunt man who knew what needed to be done; he was an instant hit. Looking resplendent in his uniform, oozing the authority of his rank, he impressed everyone as an articulate, tough-talking, clear-headed officer; unwittingly the General invited comparison with the circumlocutory External Affairs Minister, with the discredited and inconsistent Defence Minister, not to mention with the halting and pausing Prime Minister, and with the always-full-of-himself Home Minister. Here was a man who was prepared to tell the Pakistani military establishment to "lay-off" in the on-

ly idiom that Pervez Musharraf understands.

A few hours after the General's cameo performance came the "corrective" statement issued in the name of the Defence Minister. Mr. Fernandes was deemed to be chiding the Army Chief for having talked of the nuclear weapons "in a cavalier manner". The men in uniform were not amused; they refused to take a lesson in responsible behaviour from Mr. Fernandes, certainly not from a man who only a few days earlier had talked recklessly of "absorbing the first strike". Mindful of the adverse reaction within the armed forces to this public put-down, the Government tried to suggest that the Defence Minister's statement was not meant as a rebuke to the Army Chief but was in fact intended to calm western "fears".

The armed forces community has refused to buy this explanation. Those in active service are bound by the discipline, but no such restraint is applicable to the retired corps. Senior retired officers have flooded the newspapers' letter to the editor columns. In a letter published in *The Tribune*, a retired Lt. General warns: "He (Defence Minister) is used to leading agitated workers to create anarchy and has had no experience in interacting with a class of our society whose whole ethos is based on being firm but fair and courteous. He must never forget that he is dealing with officers and gentlemen, who are gagged by military discipline and the oath they have taken. He should not take this as weakness and belittle them in public."

The January 11 "clarification" has left a bad taste in every army officer's mouth. That is not all. Let us now refer to the events a month earlier. On December 13, a group of terrorists attacked Parliament House. The leading prima donnas of the civilian leadership found themselves trapped inside Parliament House; scared

like trapped rats, they panicked and called in the Army. The same Defence Minister, who a month later, was lecturing the Army Chief, made the call to the same General. Till this day there has been no clarification whether in summoning the Army, the civilian leadership itself observed the Standard Operating Procedures laid down in the Instructions on Aid to the Civil Authorities by the Armed Forces, 1970.

The January 11 and December 13 developments need to be understood in the larger context of the strains that are un-

thinkingly being introduced in a "sensitive relationship", to borrow a phrase used by Vishnu Bhagwat in his affidavit against the Government. The December 1998 dismissal of a serving chief, the politicking among senior naval officers that was countenanced by the Defence Minister, Admiral Bhagwat's replacement by an officer who was clearly unequal to the leadership task expected of the Navy Chief, were the first indications of the mess that the NDA Government was making of the civilian-Army relationship.

Incompetence and worse have characterised Mr. Fernandes' equations with the defence forces, and the Prime Minister has not been able to bring himself to be a sobering voice. In fact, Mr. Vajpayee is guilty of giving in to Mr. Fernandes' blackmailing tactics and of reinducting him in the Union Cabinet; all that he could do was to ask the Defence Minister to stay away from a meeting of the Opposition leaders. Only Mr. Vajpayee can answer the question how and why the military officers should be expected to respect such a man just because he has attended a swearing-in ceremony in Rashtrapati Bhavan.

But the issue goes beyond Mr. Fernandes' unsuitability to be the Defence Minister. The crux of the matter is whether a political regime can manu-

facture a "national security" hysteria without its concomitant demands on — and expectations of — the armed forces. There is renewed faith in the efficacy of the state's coercion against dissenters and other challengers; indeed a new theology of national security is being created. The debate over POTO revealed this new itch for intolerance. The Opposition parties must fall silent just because this or that Minister invokes the "national security" mantra. Those who dare question even the Government's tactics invite the risk of being labelled a collaborator in the tradition of a Man Singh, rather than being a defiant Rana Pratap, be it the question of joining anti-Pakistan all-party delegations or of caving in to the United States' pressure on talks with Pakistan.

There is a new "josh" among the Prime Minister and his senior colleagues, all itching to fight the "aar-paar ki ladai" (decisive battle) against Pakistan. Machoism has cast its spell over the septuagenarian crowd. Armed forces and their willingness to die in defence of the country are being banded about by third-rate political leaders, especially those involved in Uttar Pradesh. Our economic priorities are to be re-adjusted to suit the calibrated beating of the war-drums. The incessant chanting of national security is proving a heady intoxicant.

The keystone in the new theological edifice of national security is a touching faith in the institution of the armed forces. In fact, we would soon be resembling Pakistan if the present inclination to concede a centrality to the armed forces remains unchecked. The only redeeming feature is that the defence forces' leadership knows that political problems can be sorted out only by political methods available only to the political leadership. For instance, Gen. Padmanabhan is on record having argued very sensibly that insurgency in Kashmir was best amenable to political instrumentalities. The fraudulent 'deshbhakts' who preside over New Delhi ought to be slowed down in their heedless quest for making India into a garrison state.

Links in global terror chain comes to light

9-08 W
H-5
23/11

Jaideep Mazumdar
Kolkata, January 22

THE TERROR attacks on the American Center have testified to the close bonds among all the Islamic terror groups.

Of the two groups that have claimed responsibility for the attack — the Harkat-ul-Jehadi-e-Islami (Huji) and the Asif Reza Commandos — the latter happens to be a new outfit and an adjunct of the Huji.

The Asif Reza Commandos is named after Asif Reza Khan — a member of the Huji — who was killed by the Gujarat Police about two months ago. Reza, a dealer in stone chips, was a resident of the Beniapukur area of this city and had come in contact with Masood Azhar and Farhan Malik during his detention in Tihar Jail under the Tada in the early 1990s.

"It's likely that the attack was primarily an operation of the Huji, with logistical support from the locally-formed Asif Reza Commandos. And the attack could have been staged to avenge the killing of Reza," said a senior Intelligence officer.

It is pertinent that the claim of the Huji's involvement in the attack was made by a person who claimed to be calling from Dubai. Azhar's close associate Farhan Malik and one of the original founders of Huji are currently holed up in Dubai. "We don't know if it was Malik or some Huji member who called up. But things will be clear once we follow up the leads that have emerged," the officer said.

The Intelligence agencies have only sketchy information on the Asif Reza Commandos. "This group was formed very recently with recruits from Malda and Murshidabad. We suspect this group of having close links with

Bangladesh-based Islamic radical groups like the Sipahi-e-Saheba-e-Mohammad and the Asbal-al-Ansar. There's a strong link between these groups and the HUJI, that's primarily based in Pakistan and backed by the ISI," the officer said. "Most probably, the Huji has spawned this group in memory of Rezak, who was from this part of the country. That way, it would have been able to recruit many fundamentalists from here. And being local, this group could be providing refuge and other logistical support to the HUJI," he added.

According to Intelligence agencies, today's operation bears the stamp of the Huji. "The Huji has carried out similar operations over the past one year in Kashmir, targeting primarily policemen. They have killed more than two dozen policemen in that State over the past few months," a Central Intelligence agency officer said.

"And their attacks have all taken place at dawn or dusk. The Huji terrorists are not suicide attackers and their operations are very well-planned. They strike at a time when the police are not on their guard, as had happened this morning," the officer said.

The Huji is a member of Osama bin Laden's al-Jabhah al-Islamiyyah al-Alamiyyah li-Qital al-Yahud wal-Salibiyyin (Islamic World Front for Struggle Against Jews & Crusaders).

It also has close links with the radical Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS) and its funds are routed through the al-Aqsa Islamic Bank and al-Barkaat Bank. Intelligence agencies suspect that the Huji routed funds through these two banks that have offices in Bangladesh, to prop up the Asif Reza Commandos.

Delhi sees 'larger design', trains gun on ISI

FBI chief clams up

FROM PRANAY SHARMA
AND SEEMA GUHA

New Delhi, Jan. 22: L.K. Advani today accused the ISI of backing Farhan Malik and his terrorist outfit, the Harkat-ul-Jihadi-e-Islami, seizing on the Dubai-based don's claim that he masterminded this morning's attack on the American Center in Calcutta.

Signals emerging from North Block suggest that an attempt is being made to establish Malik alias Aftab Ansari's links with Omar Sheikh, one of the three terrorists India had swapped for the hijacked passengers of IC 814 at Kandahar two years ago.

Advani went on the offensive even as the Indian security establishment threw a tight ring around key installations and the capital's diplomatic enclave. The home minister said the criminal gang based in Dubai was also responsible for the abduction of Calcutta shoe baron Partha Pratim Roy Burman. Delhi, which has an extradition treaty with the UAE, has demanded that Malik be handed over.

Condemning the early-morning strike, Advani said: "I hope we will be able to get to the bot-

tom of it." The home minister said the group, which had links with the ISI, had called up police in Calcutta to say: "We have done it." The outfit also threatened to carry out similar attacks in Delhi and Gujarat.

Superintendent of police Rajiv Kumar identified the caller as Malik, whom he had interrogated earlier. This was done through a voice test.

Delhi is reading a "larger design" behind the strike, which coincided with the maiden visit of FBI director Robert Mueller to the country.

Sources in the government said Malik was enlisted by the ISI in early 2000 to carry out

Baseless: Pak

Islamabad, Jan. 22 (Reuters): Pakistan today rejected Indian allegations that its intelligence service was involved in the attack on the American Center.

"These are totally baseless charges," foreign ministry spokesman Aziz Ahmed Khan told a news briefing. "As you know, Pakistan has condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations."

covert operations in India. Malik, till recently known as a small-time smuggler from Uttar Pradesh, was set up in March 2000 in Dubai and provided with a Pakistani passport. In July last year, he allegedly organised the kidnapping of Roy Burman and released him after a ransom of Rs 37.5 million.

In August 2001, Malik was taken to Pakistan by the ISI and put in touch with Omar Sheikh, now an active member of the Harkat-ul-Jihadi-e-Islami. Sheikh, a British citizen, had come to India through Pakistan in 1994. He was involved in a series of terrorist strikes in the country and was in prison at the time of the Kandahar hijacking.

Sheikh is credited with directing Malik to operate through Bangladesh and identify potential "high value targets" in India.

Sources said a group of 10 terrorists, led by Arshad Khan, a Pakistani national, was sent to India early last year through Bangladesh. Arshad and other members of the gang were trained by the ISI and Sheikh in Islamabad.

Malik helped Arshad set up a leather business in Agra and he was given an Indian identity. On October 29, the criminal gang was busted and six of its members were arrested. Around the same time, a consignment of weapons meant for the group from Pakistan was intercepted near the Rajasthan-Gujarat border.

Malik, who operates from Dubai, is said to be a frequent visitor to Pakistan. Officials feel that this morning's incident clearly indicates Pakistan's attempts to destabilise India through a third country.



FBI chief Robert Mueller with LK Advani in New Delhi. Picture by Rajesh Kumar

FROM SEEMA GUHA

New Delhi, Jan. 22: FBI director Robert S. Mueller, who is on a whistle-stop tour of the region, refused to draw hasty conclusions from this morning's incident in Calcutta. He was non-committal on dubbing the shootout in front of the American Center a "terrorist attack" nor could he be forced to comment on the police commissioner's assertion that it was an "attack on American interests".

Mueller said it was too early to draw any conclusions about the motive or identity of the attackers. "We will wait for the facts," he said, adding that it would be unfair to come to a hasty judgement. The US, it was apparent, would rather wait for the investigations to be completed before pointing an accusing finger at any group.

The FBI chief has already been to Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Yemen to share their experiences in fighting terrorism and explore ways for a better worldwide cooperation in tracking down terrorists. From India, Mueller travels to Pakistan and Afghanistan. He said Islamabad has sought US help in fighting terrorism.

Though the FBI chief is spending just one working day in the capital, the Vajpayee government went out of its way to ac-

commodate him. He called on Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, home minister L.K. Advani and national security adviser Brajesh Mishra, besides meeting top CBI and IB officials.

Mueller is said to have brought valuable information for Indian investigators on al Qaida operations and links with suspects in India. Indian and US agencies are examining possibilities that some of the names involved in the hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane from Kathmandu were also involved in the September 11 attacks.

But Mueller refused to go into specifics, saying he exchanged information during his meeting with Indian officials. Cooperation between India and the US had increased considerably since 9/11, he added.

The US has registered a case against the hijackers of IC 814 and investigations are on. Indian officials are hoping that if the US probe can pin Jaish-e-Mohammad as the group behind the hijacking, Washington can ask Pakistan to hand over Masood Azhar, who is on top of New Delhi's wanted list. Mueller said no answers would be forthcoming till the probe was completed. It was important to recognise that the evidence collected had to be admissible in court. Different countries have different laws of evidence, he added.

INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

Krishi Anusandhan Bhavan-II, Pusa, New Delhi-110012

7th All India Entrance Examination for admission to Undergraduate programme and Award of National Talent Scholarship in Agriculture & Allied subjects other than Veterinary Science for the academic session 2002-2003.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi will conduct Seventh All India Entrance Examination for filling up 15% of the total number of seats in State Agricultural Universities, Central Agricultural University, Imphal (Manipur) & 100% of the seats in National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal (Uttar Pradesh) in

FOUR POLICEMEN KILLED, 20 INJURED

Attack on American Center in Kolkata

237/1
9-D & N Sec-5
AD-1

By Malabika Bhattacharya

KOLKATA, JAN. 22. In the biggest suspected terrorist strike in West Bengal, gunmen today killed four policemen and critically wounded 20 persons in front of the American Center on the Jawaharlal Nehru Road here.

The incident took place half a km from a maidan where policemen were rehearsing for the Republic Day parade.

The "ride-by" shooting occurred at 6.35 a.m. when the area was enveloped in fog.

Eyewitnesses said four gunmen on two motorcycles came and sprayed bullets on the security personnel who were handing over charge to the morning shift personnel.

About three dozen policemen present there were so shocked that they did not fire even a single shot in retaliation.

"We were so surprised that we could not react," said an injured policeman, Roshan Chhetri. The killers were clad in Army fatigue and had their AK-47 and AK-56 rifles hidden behind black shawls.

The four policemen were killed on the spot and 18 others were injured in an operation that lasted just four minutes. The other two injured are a pedestrian and a private security guard hired by the American Center.

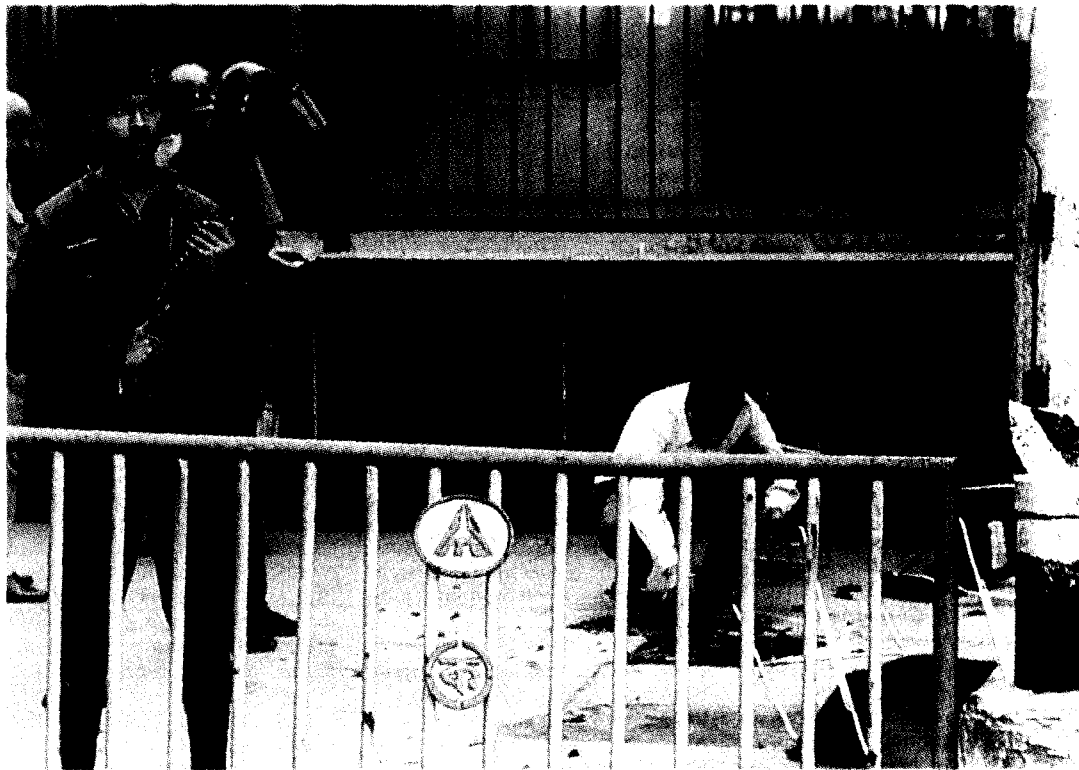
Of the nine persons admitted to hospital, four were battling for life, the attending doctors said.

It looked like a battlefield with bodies and puddles of blood on the pavement and road in front of the American Center. The police van, which was waiting to ferry the nightshift policemen, bore the marks of bullets.

The killers fired at least 54 rounds and even a nearby tree had bullet marks. At least 20 or so plastic chairs, caps and batons of the unsuspecting policemen lay scattered on the ground.

Police clueless

Police were clueless about the



Forensic experts take samples of blood in front of the American Center in Kolkata on Tuesday. — AP

identity of the assailants. But various newspaper offices and private television channels received phone calls from people who identified themselves as leaders of groups such as A.R. Commando and the Harkat-ul-Jehad-i-Islami.

Police are trying to ascertain whether the attack was sponsored by terrorists or a crime syndicate, some of whose members were arrested in the course of the investigations in relation to the abduction of the city businessman, Partha Roy Burman.

"We heard that certain militant outfits had claimed responsibility for the American Center massacre. We are still in the process of verifying it," the Chief Minister, Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, said. He visited the injured policemen

in hospital. Security at all foreign consulates and other vital installations in the city have been strengthened in view of the incident. Mr. Bhattacharjee held meetings with senior police and Government officials to review the security measures. A special alert was sounded in the State and all entry and exit points have been sealed.

The U.S. consulate, located about 500 metres from the American Center, is under a security blanket with concrete barriers put up in front of the building during the day. Both the consulate and the American Center would remain closed till further notice.

The Chief Minister, had informed the Home Minister, L.K. Advani, about today's incident. He visited the American Center

and discussed the incident and its ramifications with the U.S. Consul-General, Christopher Sandrolini.

The Congress and the Trinamool Congress condemned the attack but accused the State Government of "abject failure to check terrorism".

Threat to Viswabharathi

All police stations in the Birbhum district were put on alert as an anonymous letter threatened to blow up the Viswabharathi University at Santiniketan and the Bakreshwar thermal power station, among other institutions, on the Republic Day.

"We have taken it seriously and are stepping up security," the Superintendent of Police, Jayanta Kumar Basu, said.

THE HINDU

23 JAN 2002

CBI SHARES INFORMATION ON U.S. CENTER ATTACK WITH FBI

Phone call traced to Dubai

By Vinay Kumar 19-1

NEW DELHI, JAN. 23. In a crucial development in the probe into the shooting incident outside the American Center in Kolkata on Tuesday, Central agencies have traced the telephone number of the caller — Farhan Malik alias Aftab Ansari — to Dubai. He has allegedly owned responsibility for the attack saying that it was the handiwork of the Harkat-ul-Jehad-i-Islami.

CBI sources said that Farhan Malik — an Indian belonging to Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh — had telephoned the Superintendent of Police, CID, Kolkata, from Dubai at about 10 a.m. on Tuesday threatening similar attacks by his group in Delhi and Gujarat after claiming responsibility for the Kolkata outrage.

Stretching its resources and expertise, the CBI — which had probed the March 1993 Bombay serial blasts where several important leads had the Dubai connection — tracked down the telephone number from where the call was made to Kolkata.

Talking to *The Hindu* this evening, the CBI Director, P.C. Sharma, said the telephone

number had been conveyed to the U.S. authorities through proper channels. As things stood now, the scene of follow-up action might shift to Dubai. It was still being ascertained whether the telephone was that of Malik or a public one.

Mr. Sharma, who had an hour-long meeting with the visiting Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) chief, Robert S. Mueller, on Tuesday, said the CBI was offering all possible assistance in investigating the Kolkata incident. The agency also happens to host the core group on terrorism which collects and disseminates information relating to terrorist incidents.

The FBI has agreed to share information on interrogation records and documents of the Al-Qaeda and Taliban cadre which it has collected in Afghanistan as well as from Pakistan. It was pointed out that a majority of the records and documents were being translated and would be made available in due course of time.

Mr. Sharma said the FBI chief was also told about Omar Sheikh, British citizen and graduate of the London School of Economics, who

was lodged in the Tihar Jail here. Omar Sheikh was one of the three terrorists freed by India in return for the safe release of hostages of the hijacked IC-814 flight to Kandahar in December 1999. He said the use of third countries for targeting India by terrorist groups was indicative from the Kolkata shooting incident.

The CBI chief said the subject of the FBI registering a case in the IC-814 hijacking as an American citizen was on the flight also figured during the discussions. The CBI would support the move of extradition of the hijackers of IC-814 to the U.S. from Pakistan as it would mean beginning of trial there. The CBI presentation for the visiting FBI team also focussed on the IC-814 hijacking case.

As the FBI Director's visit comes amid hectic diplomatic initiatives in the post-December 13 scenario, Mr. Sharma said terrorism should be tackled through a global approach. On the list of 22 wanted Indian criminals and terrorists believed to be sheltered in the U.S., he said the list included nine Punjab militants. Such information was being periodically shared with the FBI.

Farhan Malik's extradition may be sought

By Malabika Bhattacharya

KOLKATA, JAN. 23. The Dubai-based Farhan Malik alias Aftab Ansari, prime suspect in Tuesday's Kolkata killings — and said to be operating from Pakistan — may be put in the list of India's Most Wanted which the Centre would give to Pakistan with a request for extradition.

The Special Secretary, Union Home Ministry, Ashok Bhandari, who flew here on Tuesday, is believed to have told the State Government to hand over all evidences relating to the incident so that the Centre could bring Ansari — suspected to be enjoying the support of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence, Pakistan support — back home for trial.

A two-member FBI team was in the city today to ascertain whether there was enough evidence to link the ISI with Tuesday's killings.

According to reports with the CID, Ansari's passport shows that he shuttles between Dubai and Karachi. The State Government became aware of Ansari's existence at the time of the abduction of Partha Roy Burman, owner of Khadim shoes and a city-based businessman. Ansari played a key role in the planning and execution of the abduction.

The American Center is said to have found vital clues to the identity of the assailants. The FBI men are going through the video footage of the shootout obtained from the closed circuit television camera installed at the Center.

Ansari, belonging to the Harkat-ul-Jehad-e-Islami, had telephoned certain city-based newspapers and private television channels and the CID officials from Dubai on Tuesday claiming responsibility for the killings. "I want you to know and

through it your people, Government and police, that I, on behalf of A.R. (Asif Reza) Commando Force, am taking the full responsibility (for the killings)," he told *The Telegraph* newspaper.

The killings, Ansari explained, was to avenge the death of Rajan alias Asif Reza Khan, prime suspect in the abduction of Partha Roy Burman, a few months ago. Rajan, one of Ansari's key men, was killed in an encounter with policemen in Rajkot in Gujarat some time back.

"I can assure you that the investigation is progressing smoothly. We are moving in the right direction. We hope to be in a position to tell you who the killers are, soon," Mr. Bhandari said.

The U.S. Consul-General in Kolkata, Christopher J. Sandrolini, met Government officials at the State headquarters today and expressed satisfaction over the stepped-up security arrangement at the American Center and the U.S. consulate, located close by. Meanwhile, about 50 persons have been detained here for interrogation. Police are also examining the international calls made in the past few days to get a possible clue. They are conducting intensive combing operations all over the State in search of the assailants. The administration is keeping a close watch on the madrasas, especially in the districts bordering Bangladesh.

"We have not been able to confirm the claims made by certain terrorist outfits for the Kolkata killings," Amit Kiran Deb, State Home Secretary, said. "We are collaborating with the Central intelligence agencies to find out the culprits. If they think they would need the help of the Interpol, they would do so."

THE HINDU

24 JAN 2002

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2002

THE CASE FOR DE-ESCALATION

THE DEFENCE MINISTER, George Fernandes, is absolutely correct when he says that other nations do not have the right to demand that India pull back its troops from the western border. But there is a fundamental question which goes well beyond such strident, even aggressive, assertions of sovereign privilege — should we de-escalate the situation on the border? The cool-headed and rational answer, which is often lost in the noisy chorus of war rhetoric, is yes. A good way to begin addressing the question is by analysing New Delhi's pre-conditions for de-escalation, which would mean scaling down the massive deployment of Indian forces (now locked eyeball to eyeball with their Pakistani counterparts) and taking other appropriate steps to signal that the threat of war has receded. Mr. Fernandes and other senior functionaries in the NDA Government have linked de-escalation to the fulfillment of two demands — the handing over of the terrorists on India's wish-list by Pakistan and its putting a clear and unmistakable end to infiltration and cross-border terrorism. With New Delhi signalling that President Musharraf will be given some time to meet the latter demand, the focus has shifted almost wholly to New Delhi's list of 20 terrorists.

To link de-escalation to the return of the 'Terrible Twenty' is, to understate the point, not the brightest of ideas. To begin with, there is the risk — which has already turned real with Islamabad preparing a counter-roster of alleged Pakistani criminals living in India — that the diplomatic battle of wits will turn into a dreary and unrewarding battle of lists. Debates about lack of proof, discussions about extradition procedures, differences over details can only mean frustration and delay. Moreover, New Delhi is also helpless in a sense since it cannot prevent the fugitives from moving to other havens in the Middle East or elsewhere. India may have every

reason to maintain a cautious scepticism while waiting to see whether Gen. Musharraf's bold words on January 12 against extremism and intolerance are translated into action. But at the same time, it cannot ignore the fact that the Pakistani regime has already initiated some courageous steps in cracking down on jihadi elements. At last count, some 2,000 Islamic fundamentalists have been put into prison, among them a clutch of national and local-level leaders.

It may be one of the many ironies of the present situation that an undemocratic Pakistani regime headed by none other than the architect of the Kargil occupation has initiated a process which holds out the hope of a radical reduction in infiltration and cross-border terrorism. But Gen. Musharraf (albeit reluctantly and under severe international pressure) has been pitchforked into a war against extremism and it is in India's own interest to ensure that he carries it through all the way. In reining in the jihadis, Gen. Musharraf has come under pressure from various segments (army, political, public) of his domestic constituency. Pushing him much further, by upping the ante or even maintaining the existing levels of heat, carries the risk of derailing the process he has initiated — a factor which must be entered into New Delhi's diplomatic calculus. De-escalation and an offer of dialogue would do more than reduce the risk of what could be only a futile and profitless war. It would thwart the impression that New Delhi has closed the window of opportunity thrown open by Islamabad's moves to contain Islamic extremism and is reluctant to negotiate a solution to the Kashmir crisis. Just as importantly, it might just provide Gen. Musharraf — who has promised that acts of terrorism in the name of Kashmir will no longer be tolerated — with the necessary elbow room to finish a job he has started.

THE HINDU

22 JAN 2002

U.S. will help India check infiltration

Times News Network

NEW DELHI: India and the U.S. will discuss military cooperation against terrorism for the first time even as the U.S. helps set up a pilot project to defend the Indian border against infiltration. Both subjects will be discussed within the ambit of the joint working group on counter-terrorism, which began its two-day meeting here on Monday.

While both Indian and U.S. officials were not ready to give out details, the pilot project, could enable India to install high-tech sensors that would help detect human movement across the border. A demonstration project will be undertaken by Sandia Laboratories from Los Alamos. The two sides provided even fewer details about the military to military cooperation which will be discussed on Tuesday, but Frances Taylor, the State Department coordinator on counter-terrorism, said the U.S. was working with several countries on improving military capacity for the global campaign against terrorism.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

22 JAN 2002

Key Army commander asked to go on leave

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, January 20

HT-1 2/11
LT-GEN KAPIL Vij, one of the key commanders in the current build-up on the Western Front, has been asked to go on leave. Sources in Army Headquarters informally admitted that this virtually amounts to a sack.

He was on Thursday relieved of the command of the Ambala-based 2 Corps. Reports suggest that Lt-Gen Vij had ordered movements of troops under his command without the knowledge and approval of his superiors.

Lt.-Gen PK Thakur, Chief of Staff Army Training Command, Shimla, has been attached to 2 Corps headquarters to officiate as its commander.

The orders were issued by the Military Secretary at Army Headquarters on Thursday. Lt-General Thakur's appointment has to be approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.

This is an unusual development, especially at a time when the Army has been mobilised for the biggest-ever troop build-up on the Pakistan Front. The Ambala-based 2 Corps, which Lt.-Gen Vij headed, has a crucial role in the build-up, and the military plans in the event of outbreak of hostilities.

The Ambala-based 2 Corps is one the three strike corps of the Indian Army. A strike corps is an elite formation, comprising up to one lakh troops and a substantial armoured element,

J - D S R. Lumbly
trained and equipped for offensive operations inside enemy territory in the event of war.

The two other strike corps are the Mathura-based 1 Corps and the Bhopal-based 21 Corps. The Ambala Corps operates in the Punjab-Rajasthan sector, and is under the control of the Western Command.

The Army declined to comment officially on the reason for Lt.-General Vij suddenly being asked to go on leave. "Lt.-General Vij had completed his tenure as a corps commander, and was due to be shifted out," a spokesman said.

"He's on short leave," the spokesman added, when asked why Lt.-General Vij was not given a posting if he was due to move out.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

21 JAN 2002

'MUSHARRAF SPEECH DOES NOT TAKE US ANYWHERE'

Nobody can ask us to pull back: Fernandes

2/1
NEW YORK, JAN. 20. The Defence Minister, George Fernandes, today questioned the right of nations to ask India to pull back its troops and raise the fear of a border conflict turning into a flash-point, and ruled out the threat of a nuclear war.

Addressing the Indian community leaders here, he took objection to western nations asking India to pull back its forces on the border saying such a step could spark a flare-up.

Mr. Fernandes said Indian defence forces were disciplined and professional and obeyed the orders of the political leadership and the Government. They would not act on their own and were more than capable of defending against any threat to India's security and sovereignty.

He described the talk of nuclear danger in the sub-continent as an insult to the people and leaders of the region and said that there was no nuclear threat. He said there were several eyeball-to-eyeball confrontations during the Cold

War era but nuclear bombs were never used.

Referring to Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, he said it was also abetting militancy in the north-east though its activities in Kashmir were in the spotlight.

Asking Indians not to be obsessed with Pakistan, Mr. Fernandes said Islamabad was no match for New Delhi in any sphere. On his discussions in Washington with senior Bush administration officials, he said the defence ties between India and the U.S. had seen many ups and downs. He added that relations between Washington and New Delhi should not be dependent on any third country.

In an interview to Fox News television, Mr. Fernandes virtually ruled out de-escalation on the border until Pakistan fulfilled two of India's demands that Islamabad hand over criminals and terrorists and stop cross-border terrorism.

"What good it would do when you (Pakistan) enable these ter-

rorists from your territory even today to move into our territory," he added.

Asked whether he expected a peaceful solution, he said "all of us want a peaceful solution. That is why despite having sent our troops right up to the frontlines, we got into seeking diplomatic ways of resolving this problem".

On Gen. Musharraf's promise in a recent speech to crack down on terrorism, Mr. Fernandes said the words that there will be a crackdown "do not take us anywhere when we are witnessing trans-border terrorism on a daily basis. Nothing has changed since the speech in terms of delivering".

When the interviewer noted that Gen. Musharraf had turned over seven members of Al-Qaeda to the U.S., he replied "if he has turned over seven members of Al-Qaeda to the U.S., then he should hand over the 20 others we have named". — PTI

Pakistan moots four-part peace process

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JAN. 20. The Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, has suggested a four-part process to defuse the crisis in Kashmir, which among other things, would involve New Delhi and Islamabad to accept the centrality of Kashmir to the dispute to enable them to move beyond their long-held positions.

"Indians say 'Let's discuss all issues' but sometimes they leave out Kashmir. Kashmir is the core issue," Gen. Musharraf told the Aspen Strategy Group which was reported in *The New York Times*.

According to Gen. Musharraf's four-part process, India and Pakistan must resume an official dialogue, both must accept the premise that Kashmir is central to the dispute, eliminate from discussions what each side finds unacceptable and finally, construct an agreement on the basis of alternatives to their known positions.

Gen. Musharraf referred to the Agra Summit and once again voiced his disappointment to the visiting group of American national security experts that the Indian Cabinet had overturned a declaration which he had negotiated with the Prime Minister, A.B. Vajpayee, and regretted that an accord was "scuttled" by hardliners.

The "body language" of Mr. Vajpayee suggested that he wanted to be conciliatory on Kashmir, Gen. Musharraf said, adding that India should be more imaginative in its approach.

Initially he was reluctant to crack down on religious extremists, but soon realised that his actions were supported by an overwhelming number of people of his country, he said. "I thought ten times about putting my hand in the beehive of religious extremism," Gen. Musharraf said.

After witnessing the protest of militants "I realised this was the maximum they could do and that the vast majority of the people were with me".

See also Page 9

Islamabad denies transit facility for Indian wheat

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, JAN. 20 Pakistan has decided not to extend transit facility for the Indian wheat being supplied to Afghanistan under the World Food Programme (WFP), on the ground that it is infested.

"We have decided not to allow the transit of Indian wheat through Pakistan due to reports that it was infested with germs and diseases which can harm Pakistani wheat," the Federal Minister for Food, Agriculture and Livestock, Khair Muhammad Junejo, said at a press conference here.

Mr. Junejo said the Government had communicated its reservation to the World Food Programme (WFP). "We have told them that Pakistan would not take any risk which might harm its wheat".

The WFP had made a deal with India for 50,000 tonnes of wheat for the Afghan refugees,

which was to be transported through Pakistan.

The Minister said the WFP had requested Pakistan to provide 200,000 tonnes of wheat and of this it had lifted 80,000 tonnes. The remaining would be lifted soon.

The Pakistan Agriculture Ministry said the Indian wheat, infested with "seed-borne fungus like striga and disease like Karnal Bunt," could harm wheat production during the germination of seeds.

Under a new policy, the Pakistan Government had decided to allow private sector to export wheat and the target for the current financial year was put at 1.3 millions.

"The Government will start the bidding process from next week and it will be completed by April 30 to clear a backlog of 1.3 million tonnes of surplus wheat", the Pakistan Commerce Minister, Abdul Razook Dawood, said.

THE HINDU

2002 JAN 21

21 JAN 2002

US defence official on review mission

Dawood's handover to have dramatic effect: Advani

ST-1 2/11 9-D & N Deewi
Press Trust of India

Srinjoy Chowdhury and Sanjay Singh in New Delhi/Srinagar

Jan. 20. — The director of the USA's Defence Intelligence Agency is here to discuss the situation in Jammu and Kashmir and along the Indo-Pak border with military and Intelligence officials.

Vice-Admiral Thomas R Wilson is back in Delhi after a short trip to J&K. He was accompanied by the US ambassador, Mr Robert Blackwill.

He'll be in the capital for a couple of days and meet senior officers of the armed forces and Intelligence bigwigs. His visit, defence officials said, was a return visit and part of the military-to-military exchanges that are being institutionalised. Senior Indian defence Intelligence officials had visited the USA some time ago.

The DIA is involved in Intelligence-gathering and analysis for the army, navy, air force and marines.

The visit is another example of closer cooperation between the two countries on security issues. During his visit to J&K today, the DIA chief "assessed the situation on the ground" (infiltration and other militant activities). Among those whom he met were the chief minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah, and Lt-Gen JBS Yadav, commander of 16 Corps (based in Nagrota). An official said the US government mostly agreed with India on military affairs, infiltration and terrorism.

Dr Abdullah couldn't be present at the airport during the taking off of the first-ever direct flight for Haj pilgrims from Srinagar because of his "preoccupation" with Vice-Admiral Wilson. The ceremony was attended by the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Omar Abdullah, and the Union civil aviation minister, Mr Syed Shah Nawaz Hussain.

The chief minister said he had discussed

issues such as Pakistan-backed terrorism and Intelligence sharing with Vice-Admiral Wilson. Dr Abdullah accompanied the Intelligence chief to Delhi.

On Pakistan's "retaliatory" move to submit its list of wanted criminals to India, Mr Omar Abdullah said: "Let Pakistan first take action on the list of gangsters and

Lt-Gen sent on leave

NEW DELHI, Jan. 20. — Even as a war-like situation prevails on the Indo-Pak border, a Lt-Gen based in Rajasthan has been 'removed'.

The defence ministry hasn't issued any statement, but defence sources said Lt-Gen Kapil Vij, commander of 2 Corps (usually based in Ambala) has "been asked to go on leave." Such a decision in the middle of a situation that could blow up into a war is unusual, and there is speculation that the move is related to the recent fire at Bikaner in which a lot of equipment was destroyed. But how could the corps commander be held responsible for the incident was not clear. Lt-Gen Vij was sent on leave on Thursday.

The 2 Corps is one of the three elite strike forces of the Army, comprising the offensive capacity. Like other two strike corps, 2 Corps is now at a little distance from the Indo-Pak border.

— SNS

terrorists which India had given to it, and only then we would consider anything about the proposed list which Islamabad is planning to submit to the Indian authorities".

General Pervez Musharraf's statement that the Indian nationals who figured in the list of 20 were not in Pakistan has made New

Delhi sceptical about his intentions. "Gen Musharraf is a short-sighted person. He had enough time to move them from and within Pakistan. He should look for them not only in the strict geographical boundaries of his country but also in areas occupied and controlled by it," Mr Abdullah said.

Powell optimistic: The US secretary of state today said the Indo-Pak situation "has improved" a little in the last one week and a decision has been taken to find a diplomatic solution to differences between the neighbours, agencies adds from Washington.

The situation was, however, still tense, he told *Fox News* from Tokyo, and Washington would remain concerned till there was a complete de-escalation.

General Colin Powell said his conversations in Islamabad and New Delhi, where he had been last week, had convinced him that "things have improved a little bit in the last week... but it's still a tense situation and not a desirable situation when there are armies facing one another at a close distance but both are trying to find a peaceful solution."

The troops, he said, would not return to their peace-time locations till sufficient confidence had been built up between the two sides.

He said Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee and Gen Musharraf were interested in a solution through diplomatic and political means.

The Prime Minister, Gen Powell said, was impressed by the Pakistani President's speech in which he had talked of getting tough against terrorists. He had followed up on his commitment, the secretary of state said.

On India's demand that Pakistan hand over 20 terrorists, he said Gen Musharraf was examining the list closely.

On the Pakistani President's statement that Osama bin Laden may have died, he said: "We don't know where he is and we don't know whether he is dead or alive."

MUMBAI, Jan. 20. — Mr LK Advani tonight said if Pakistan extradited Dawood Ibrahim, it would have a "dramatic effect" on the people. The Union home minister was addressing a public meeting here.

"If Pakistan does not follow the Simla agreement, it will have to face the consequences," he said. "We will achieve a decisive victory over Pakistan-sponsored terrorism and resolve the vexed Jammu and Kashmir dispute completely."

In New York, Mr George Fernandes today questioned the right of nations to ask India to pull back its troops and raise the fear of a border conflict turning into a flashpoint. He ruled out the threat of a nuclear war.

Addressing Indian community leaders, he said the defence forces were disciplined and professional. "They won't act on their own and are more than capable of defending against any threat to India."

The defence minister described the talk of nuclear danger in the subcontinent as an insult to the people and leaders of the region. He pointed out that there were several eyeball-to-eyeball confrontations during Cold War but nuclear bombs were never used. He said Pakistan was also abetting terrorism in the North-east.

In Srinagar, the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Omar Abdullah, today said there were mixed signals about implementation of the steps announced by President Pervez Musharraf to crack down on extremists.

Asserting that de-escalation at the border was not in the offing in near future, he said: "After a week, Pakistan is continuing with its dilly-dallying attitude towards the demands of India. Though the speech of Gen Musharraf was right, New Delhi has decided this time that it won't rely completely on the promises."

The impact of Gen Musharraf's speech could be realised in March when snow melts in the mountain passes, Mr Abdullah told reporters at the airport after seeing off the Haj flight from Srinagar. "For the time being, he (Musharraf) could show his seriousness by handing over the terrorists in the list already provided by New Delhi."

'stand a process

led Gen Musharraf to defer his speech from 10 January to 12 January. He made changes in his speech to "take a harder line against India". It was only after the corps commanders' "approval of the changes" that the President addressed the nation.

Sources, however, said the commanders' dissent didn't amount to a challenge to the General's leadership. The US support to the President is among the factors muting any opposition to him. But the opposition is strong enough for the General to delay what sources

Turn to page 4

Misguided patriotism

SHIVPURI (MP), Jan. 20. — Two teenagers decided to kill General Pervez Musharraf. And to finance the 'mission' they kidnapped their employer's eight-year-old son and later killed him. The teenagers surrendered to the police and were arrested.

Manoj Ojha (16) and Ram Niwas Namdev (17), both from village Khatora, were arrested yesterday and they've confessed their crime. Inspired by films like *Gadar* and *Mission Kashmir*, the duo had decided to go to Pakistan and kill Gen Musharraf.

They kidnapped Shanu on 11 January for a ransom.

— PTI

Kalyan fields Phoolan sister

Statesman News Service

LUCKNOW, Jan. 20. — The Samajwadi Party had finally turned away from the family of its slain MP, Phoolan Devi. It wasn't nominating anyone from her family for the Mirzapur Lok Sabha seat which the once-dacoit-queen represented. It was understood that the decision was prompted by intense bickering in Phoolan's family since her murder.

But the Rashtriya Kranti Party chief, Mr Kalyan Singh, has no such problems. He promptly accepted Phoolan's sister, Munni Devi into his party and nominated her for the constituency today.

Phoolan's husband, Mr Umed Singh, has also declared his intention to contest the Mirzapur Lok Sabha seat. He strived very hard to be nominated by the Samajwadi Party but his meetings and pleadings didn't move Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav. Having failed to get the desired result, Mr Singh has decided to contest the seat as an Independent. All this comes for one obvious reason: Mirzapur had twice returned Phoolan.

More reports on page 2

UK miffed over treatment

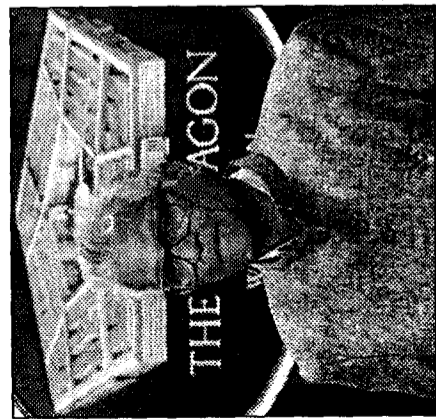
THE STATESMAN

21 JAN 2002

George clinches military deal with US

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AFP PHOTO

George Fernandes during a Press conference at the Pentagon on Friday.

with National Security Advisor Con-
dolezza Rice, pooh-poohed reports that
the US is pressuring Israel to delay its
sale of Phalcon AEWacs to India. "As far
as I am aware, the US hasn't put any
pressure on Israel."

Fernandes revealed that India was
joining hands again with the US for the
Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) project.
"We need the engine for the project."

Indian sources declined to go into the
various military items that are being
sought from the US following the lifting
of the post-Pokhran II sanctions a few
months ago. They, however, said a list of
items had been handed over to Rums-
feld when he visited Delhi in November.

Fernandes used his presence in
Washington to reiterate India's stand
that it will not pull back its forces from
the border as long as Pakistan does not

effectively end cross-border terrorism.
He will highlight the fact that New
Delhi is still awaiting follow-up action
on President Musharraf's promises.

Rumsfeld, who addressed a Press con-
ference jointly with Fernandes at the
Pentagon, dodged queries about the US
urging India to pull back its troops. He,
however, said it would not be in the
interest of either India or Pakistan to
keep their forces in such a high degree
of mobilisation.

The Defence Minister pointed out to
the Americans that despite Mushar-
raf's much-acclaimed speech, there has
not been any significant change on the
ground. "Before I began my meetings
today, I got a report of another terrorist
attack in Jammu yesterday. A civilian
was killed in an explosion."

He said discussion with the US dele-

gations had been "fruitful" and "we
expect to continue these meetings in
time to come. We believe we are on a for-
ward movement in so far as strengthen-
ing and dealing with challenges we are
facing in our respective areas. As two
multi-ethnic, multi-religious open
democratic societies, India and the
United States share a unique perspec-
tive against global terrorism and the
events of the last three months have
deepened our understanding of each
other's concerns."

Fernandes's six-day visit got under
way amid reports here that Pakistan
has "quietly shifted" more than one-
third of its troops from the Afghan bor-
der to the Indian side. *The Washington
Times* reported from Peshawar that
multiple convoys of troops were moving
north and east.

George in US to boost ²⁻¹¹⁻⁰² defence ties

S Rajagopalan ^{H.P.}

Washington, January 17 ^{18/1}

DEFENCE MINISTER George Fernandes has arrived here for talks to consolidate Indo-US defence cooperation following Washington's lifting of post-Pokhran II sanctions a few months ago. Parleys on resumption of US military sales to India and signing of an agreement for sharing military Intelligence are on the anvil.

Fernandes will also use his presence here to reiterate India's stand that it will not pull back its forces from the border as long as Pakistan does not effectively end cross-border terrorism. He will highlight the fact that New Delhi is still awaiting follow-up action on President Pervez Musharraf's promises.

The Defence Minister, who will have substantive discussions with Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, will also have meetings with Vice-President Dick Cheney and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice.

He is being accompanied by an eight-member delegation of senior defence officials. During his meetings, Fernandes is also expected to seek a clarification on the US' reported reservations on Israel selling its Phalcon AWACS at this juncture.

The State Department, while asserting that it is all for the sale, has raised questions on its "timing", ostensibly due to the current Indo-Pak confrontation.

US sources are still to clarify the position vis-à-vis the Arrow-2 anti-missile system, which Israel had offered to India. A senior official had stated that the sale of this item would violate the Missile Technology Control Regime. India has been looking for a potent anti-missile complement to protect its major cities and vital installations.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

18 JAN 2002

18 JAN 2002

Experts defend India's purchase of Israeli anti-missile system

Times News Network
MUMBAI: Defence experts say India's decision to buy the Arrow anti-missile system from Israel, which caused consternation among U.S. state department officials, is long overdue.

They say that the global proliferation of ballistic and cruise missiles has heightened India's need to acquire a theatre missile defence system, which includes an overlapping network of early warning sensors, command posts and anti-missile missiles.

The Arrow system, which was finally approved for sale by Washington on Tuesday, is necessary to counter a possible Pakistani missile attack, say these experts who did not wish to be identified. They point out that the Pakistani nuclear-capable Ghauri missile would take just 10 to 12 minutes to reach a target in most parts of the country.

The Arrow system works releasing a spray of bomblets at an approaching missile. This destroys the missile before it reaches its target. The system is

capable of detecting and tracking missiles as far as 500 kilometres away and intercepting them when they are 50 to 90 kms from the target. Experts say that detonation within 40 to 50 metres is sufficient to disable a warhead.

They say that the Arrow system includes a hypersonic ballistic missile interceptor, a launcher, a control system, a long-range electronic search, fire control radar and a mobile fire control centre.

The system is the result of a joint U.S.-Israeli programme costing 1.5 billion dollars, and was originally developed to counter threats from Iran. Nearly 60 per cent of the project is funded by Israel, with the Israeli Aircraft Industries being the prime contractor. Israel began work on the system in 1986 by signing a memorandum of understanding with the U.S.

During the Gulf War, Israel was reportedly disappointed with the performance of the American-made Patriot anti-missile system. The Arrow project was meant to satisfy Israel's need for an inter-

ceptor to defend its military assets and population centres.

Meanwhile, N.K. Pant, an Indian Air Force electronics expert, has said the air force urgently needs the Phalcon airborne early warning system — which also was approved for sale — if it has to maintain its cutting edge.

"Since the nation's air power can deter and dominate the hostile air force equipped with nuclear weaponry only through electronic superiority, it is imperative that these electronic eyes be urgently provided to the IAF," Wing Commander Pant is quoted in a defence journal as saying.

He said the Phalcon airborne warning system has the capability to detect airspace intrusions more than 300 kilometres away. This, he said, will give enough time to initiate quick counter measures. He said the Phalcon system will provide an all-weather surveillance command, control and communications. "Its price tag of \$ 250 million for two aircraft was reasonable," he stated.

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Poto's Karnataka model worrisome

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J. D & R L. Enubis

Despite the assent given recently by the President to the Karnataka Control of Organised Crime Bill, the Act continues to worry journalists and publications in the state.

This is because its definition of the word "abet" includes "passing on or publication of, without any lawful authority, any information likely to assist organised crime syndicate and the passing on or publication of or distribution of any document or matter obtained from the crime syndicate."

The retention of this clause in the KCOC Bill and the President's approval to the Act come at a time when the Centre has agreed to reintroduce the controversial Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance after withdrawing provisions which had left newsmen uneasy. Poto, it may be recalled, is modelled after the KCOC Bill and the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Bill.

Considering the Centre's decision, it was expected that the Karnataka government, too, would make appropriate amendments to the KCOC Bill.

This is because fears about a wrong or subjective interpretation by the government of the clause concerned cannot be brushed aside. Of course, the state government and its law minister Chandre Gowda, have, from time to time, assured journalists and the people in general that they have nothing to worry or feel threatened about.

Even Chief Minister SM Krishna has held out the hope that the government's actions would not violate anyone's civil rights.

While supporting the chief minister's views, senior police officers admit in private that now that the Delhi administration has also invoked the MCOC provisions, the Karnataka government has built a stronger case for the KCOC.

More so, as the KCOC has been modelled after MCOC. No doubt, the Act is supposedly

The President's nod to the Karnataka Control of Organised Crime Act without amendments is making newsmen uneasy. One of the reasons being the definition of the word 'abet' in a clause includes passing on or publication of, without legal authority, any information likely to assist an organised crime syndicate and the passing on, publication or distribution of any document obtained from the crime syndicate, writes TYAGARAJ SHARMA



Considering the Centre agreed to amend Poto after widespread protests, including from journalistic quarters, it was expected that the Karnataka government, too, would make appropriate changes to the KCOC Bill. — AP/PTI

aimed at curbing growing incidents of organised crime in the state, yet to cover publication and distribution of what are obviously journals, magazines and newspapers in its ambit cannot but leave journalists apprehensive.

For instance, the state government could even find an excuse to trouble the editor and reporters of *Nakeeran*, the Tamil magazine, argue critics of the Bill. After all, its editor, R

Gopal, went to the forest to meet Veerappan, never mind the fact that in 2000 at least he was visiting the brigand as an emissary of the governments of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, to negotiate Kannada actor Rajkumar's release, they argue.

It may be recalled that recently the Special Task Force constituted by the governments of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu to nab Veerappan, took into custody a senior reporter of *Nakee-*

ran for questioning. Of equal importance is the fact that the committee constituted under the Act to review the orders passed by competent authorities for interception of "wire, electronic or oral communication", comprises only bureaucrats.

To quote Clause 16 of the KCOC Bill, "The review committee shall consist of the following ex-officio members, namely, the chief secretary of the



Chief Minister SM Krishna: Has held out the hope that the government's actions will not violate civil rights.

government of Karnataka as chairman, the Principal Secretary, Home Department as Member and the secretary to the government of Karnataka, Law department, also as member."

This does not augur well for either the media or the public. It would perhaps have been better to appoint a member of the judiciary to the review committee.

Further, Clause 27 of the Act, too, is causing concern. The clause, "Protection of action taken in good faith", reads: "No suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against the state government or any officer or authority of the state government for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done in pursuance of this Act or any rule made thereunder or any orders issued under any such rule."

In other words, no official can be held responsible for wrongful detention or action as the government can always cite the relevant clause in its favour along with its own interpretation." This is the most worrisome aspect.

(The author is The Statesman's Bangalore-based Special Representative.)

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14 JAN 2002

Naval Chief harps on second nuclear strike capability

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Jan. 16. - The nuclear issue came to the fore yet again today with the Navy Chief, Admiral Madhvendra Singh, saying any country that rules out a first strike (like India) would have to have a second strike capability and the most assured form of such a feature is at sea.

Refusing to confirm or deny whether his warships had nuclear weapons on them, the Admiral, who spoke to the media, did not answer questions about plans to build a nuclear submarine or to lease one from Russia. Asked about the Navy's preparedness for war, he said: "Our powder is dry... We are ready".

Speaking in 'conceptual' terms, without mentioning the word 'submarine,' he said it was

more difficult to hit a target that was moving and hidden. In fact, it's impossible to find and destroy one, he added. The Admiral said the most powerful leg of the triad - assuming the three services have nuclear capability - is the naval one. Later, experts confirmed that US or Russian ballistic submarines, running on nuclear power, can survive and fire ballistic missiles from under an ice-cap.

The Army Chief, General S Padmanabhan, had spoken of India's nuclear sufficiency in terms of second-strike capability several days ago and this made Mr George Fernandes issue a clarification.

Commenting on closer Indo-US naval ties, the Naval Chief confirmed that the next instalment of Exercise Malabar involves American and Indian ships participating in exercises.

However, the dates for the exercise haven't been fixed yet.

Phalcon's flight gets White House nod

By Chidanand Rajghatta
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: The White House on Tuesday clarified that it supported the sale of the Phalcon airborne warning and control system (AWACS) and the Arrow anti-missile system by Israel to India.

Seemingly overriding objections from the State Department, White House officials told their Indian counterparts that Washington was not opposed to the transaction. However, they were a little concerned about the timing of the sale.

Some State Department officials had expressed opposition to the sale on Monday, queering the pitch ahead of defence minister George Fernandes' visit to Washington beginning on Wednesday. When Indian officials sought clarifications from the administration, they

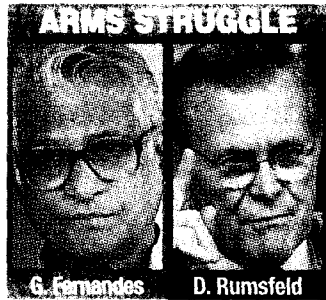
were told that the U.S. had in principle no objections to Israel fulfilling its contractual obligations.

A senior Indian defence official told this correspondent that India had from the outset told Israel that the deal would go ahead only if Tel Aviv could ensure that there would

not be any problems with Washington. Close military ties between Israel and the U.S., especially in the areas of weapons research and development, have often resulted in Washington exercising tight

oversight over Israeli arms sales to other countries.

The surmise here is that the State Department official who had expressed reservations about the sale was not articulating the government's policy but only expressing the views of the non-proliferation lobby.



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We are fully prepared for battle, says naval chief

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Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Choosing "not to confirm or deny the existence of nuclear weapons on Indian warships", navy chief Admiral Madhvendra Singh said on Wednesday the naval fleet was fully capable and ready to tackle any eventuality in the North Arabian Sea.



M. Singh

"In accordance with the government's directive, all three wings of the armed forces are fully mobilised. The navy is fully prepared and its powder is dry," said Admiral Singh at his first press conference after taking over as the navy chief.

His interaction with the media, coming shortly after similar ones by the IAF and army chiefs and a day before U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell's visit here, served to reinforce India's warning to Pakistan to take concrete steps to end cross-border terrorism.

Faced with a barrage of ques-

tions regarding India's nuclear capability, Admiral Singh said he would prefer to reply only "on the conceptual level". Any country which "espouses a nuclear doctrine of no first-use", like India does, "has an assured second-strike capability", he said.

"And countries which have a nuclear weapon triad acknowledge that the triad's most powerful leg is hidden and moving under the sea," he said. In other words, submarines constitute the best delivery systems for nukes. As for the heightened Indo-Pak tension, the navy chief said Indian warships were ready to undertake operations at an eight-hour notice and could travel 500 miles a day. "We are a blue water navy and can transverse the oceans as and when we want," he asserted.

Asked as to whether the large U.S. naval presence in the Arabian Sea would hamper Indian operations in case of a conflict, he said, "It may slightly complicate matters but it does not worry us."

He also did not attach much significance to reports that recent attempts by Pakistan to develop Gawdar in Baluchistan as a naval

base with Chinese help would give it a security depth unlike in the 1971 war. "It is still eight to 10 years away..it does not worry us," he said.

Admiral Singh remained non-committal about some key strategic issues. First, whether India would lease a larger second nuclear submarine. Second, the status of the top-secret indigenous advanced technology vessel (ATV) project. And third, taking on lease four TU-22s, long-range maritime reconnaissance aircraft which are also nuclear-capable, from Russia. "I will neither confirm or deny this," he responded.

Admiral Singh, however, was more forthcoming on what the navy wants. "The most pressing need is to ensure that we get a replacement for *INS Vikrant* (the decommissioned aircraft carrier) and *INS Viraat* (the Navy's sole aircraft carrier which has a limited life left) and their aircraft," he said.

Negotiations are in progress with Russia for the acquisition of the aircraft carrier *Admiral Gorshkov*. "As and when both parties are happy, the deal will be struck," he said.

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US brake on Israel defence deal

FROM SUJAN DUTTA

New Delhi, Jan. 15: The US has asked Israel to put on hold a deal to sell three Phalcon early warning systems to the Indian Air Force.

The US decision, taken in view of the standoff with Pakistan and disclosed a day before defence minister George Fernandes left for Washington, goes to show just how fragile the nature of the military-to-military cooperation that India has been hoping for still is.

The deal, estimated at \$500 million, was all but clinched in November when the director-general of the Israeli defence ministry, Amos Yaron, and Major-General Yossi Ben-Hanan, head of Sibat, the defence ministry's foreign wing,

visited Delhi. India had asked for a guarantee that the deal would not be subject to pressure from the US.

Fernandes will be in Washington as the head of a delegation, and talks to let Israel and India go ahead with the Phalcon deal will no doubt top its list of priorities. Before leaving for America, Fernandes told PTI that "as far as I know, we are getting them".

Even so, the American decision is a snub to the Indian side. "We cannot comment on developments right now. The matter is still under discussion. A full delegation will be in the US," the defence ministry's spokesman said.

India had urged Israel not to subject the deal to American pressure because of the experience with China. This is the sec-

ond time that the US has asked Israel to put the deal on hold.

Originally, the Phalcon systems were being built by Israel Aircraft Industries for Beijing but Washington forced the deal to be called off.

This time round, the perception in New Delhi is that an active Pakistani lobby working in the US has influenced the American decision.

"Frankly, I am not too surprised. It is more or less along expected lines," says analyst and deputy director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis Commodore C. Uday Bhaskar.

"But I don't think we should get too shirty about it in the long haul. Right now, India's fight against terrorism is tangential to American interests. Pakistan

is more important to them. Had Osama bin Laden been caught, things might have been different. In any case, we do not need the Phalcons immediately in the India-Pakistan context," he added.

According to the preliminary agreement, Israel's Elta Electronics Industries, the prime contractor in the deal, was to facilitate the supply of the Phalcon phased-array radar with the Russian IL-76 airframe chosen by India as the platform.

Air force sources in Delhi said Phalcon will give India the edge in airborne electronic intelligence.

At the moment, it is possible that Pakistan has an edge in this segment with about seven different types of unmanned aerial vehicles.

THE TELEGRAPH

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Withdrawal only if terrorism ends: Fernandes

Stateman News Service

NEW DELHI, Jan. 14. — The Army will not move its troops from the border till Pakistan begins to implement the promises made by General Pervez Musharraf to end terrorism, Mr George Fernandes, said today.

The defence minister ruled out a limited war with Pakistan at the moment saying India was still looking at diplomatic efforts, adding the Pakistani President had made the commitments about terrorism to the whole world. Implementing them would be necessary and though he may require some time to deliver, it doesn't mean India will wait indefinitely. He said even last night the Pakistani army shelled Kargil and other parts of the area, including Drass and the Mushkoh valley.

About the list of 20 criminals in Pakistan wanted in India, he said the General has been given all the information he was asking for.

India would think of de-escalation as soon as terrorism ends, he added. Since the General had made his promises just two days ago, India will have to wait for a day or two to see how complete the assurances were. Meanwhile, Gen Musharraf was "on trial," he said.

Asked about the clarification he issued after the Army Chief's statements about nuclear weapons, he said there was some discussions within the

Defence & Ministry
government and the questions had to be addressed. On Pak-Chinese ties and Beijing's transfer of nuclear and missile technology to Pakistan, he said all issues would be discussed when top officials of the two countries met. About Indo-US ties, he said he wasn't going with a shopping list though India had given the USA a list of requirements when Mr Donald Rumsfeld, was here. He said joint exercises were on the cards.

India will keep up the pressure, both diplomatic and military, till it sees definite action on the ground in Pakistan.

This despite phone calls from Mr George W Bush and other world leaders asking it to defuse tension along the border.

India is clear it is only the sustained pressure from its diplomatic manoeuvres and from deploying its armed forces that has forced Gen Musharraf to publicly renounce the use of terrorism and violence as an instrument of state policy in Pakistan.

For those pronouncements to be translated into action requires that the pressure be sustained, officials said, and "there was no question of letting up" at this stage.

Mr LK Advani has reiterated that India will not take Pakistan's words at face value. The home minister, while ending his US visit, echoed his earlier sentiment saying, "Words are not enough; we want action"

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UPPING THE ANTE

IT IS AN axiom of our democratic way of life that the political executive enjoys the exclusive right to rattle sabres. The Army's role, when ordered, is limited to using them. In this context, the markedly combative edge that shaped the overall tenor of the Chief of the Army Staff, S. Padmanabhan's press conference is truly unfortunate. The General would have done far better if he had measured his words carefully rather than lend the impression that the Army was engaging in its own bit of military muscle flexing and eager to indulge in the rhetoric of war. While the substance of his remarks was extraordinary in itself, the timing was particularly inappropriate. They were made in times that are extremely sensitive (in which a calibrated diplomatic offensive should not be undermined by an impression of needlessly aggressive posturing) as well as excessively surcharged (where a drastic upping of the ante could result in the situation spinning well out of control). More specifically, the General's comments were made exactly a day before the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf's address to the nation — a speech which was widely expected to have a direct bearing on the question of curbing cross-border terrorism and reducing the spiralling tension between New Delhi and Islamabad.

Of particular note are the General's references to the nuclear issue, which appear to have created a considerable flutter within the political leadership and which provoked the Union Defence Minister, George Fernandes, to issue a clarification which read like a modest (but nevertheless distinct) rebuke. At a time when virtually the whole world is concerned about the possible consequences of an outbreak of hostilities between the two nuclear powers in the sub-continent, it was unwise of the Army Chief to have even referred to the possibility of bringing nuclear weapons into play. Even though Gen.

Padmanabhan referred to the use of such weapons only in the context of a second strike, the language in which this specific reference was couched, which cannot but be read against the tough tenor of his other statements, risks sending the signal that India is getting into combat-mode and primed for an offensive. There is a certain margin accorded to the sabre-rattling of politicians since they often indulge in it for a variety of other ends, mainly diplomatic or political. But Generals who virtually announce that two countries are "close to actual war" are not accorded the same interpretative leeway. The Army Chief should have considered this.

As a military man, Gen. Padmanabhan enjoys a formidable reputation for competence, knowledge, even sobriety. This is why there remains a lurking suspicion that the aggressive gung-ho posture he seemed to strike at the press conference may have had the tacit blessing of the political leadership. It may be significant that Mr. Fernandes' clarification refers wholly to Gen. Padmanabhan's remarks on the nuclear issue but is absolutely silent about what could happen in the event of a limited conventional war — such as India's capability of hitting terrorist training camps across the border and the possible use of both artillery and aircraft for this purpose. It may be uncharitable to suggest that Gen. Padmanabhan's performance at the press conference was, in any way whatsoever, influenced by the compulsions of India's coercive diplomacy, which makes transparent use of the threat of war with the aim of pressuring Pakistan to crack down on the jihadi groups operating on its soil. But it must be stressed all the same that in a democracy such as ours, the role of the military must be limited to the battlefield. And it is the obligation of both the political leadership and the military brass to ensure that this remains so.

DELHI RULES OUT EASING DIPLOMATIC SANCTIONS

India rebuffs Pak

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Statesman News Service & Agencies

NEW DELHI, Jan. 13. — India today "entirely and categorically" rejected the Pakistani President's comments last night on "the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir", in which he sought intervention of human rights groups and the international community against "state terrorism" there.

However, it cautiously welcomed the declared shift in Pakistan's policy, articulated by General Musharraf in his address, but ruled out any reduction of troop mobilisation along the border until the gap between intent and action on the ground by Pakistan was lessened.

Addressing mediapersons after a meeting of the Cabinet Committee of Security today, external affairs minister Mr Jaswant Singh said, "For every one step that Pakistan takes we are willing to take two. We shall not be found wanting." He, however, rejected third-party mediation, be it American, Chinese or Russian. He also ruled out easing of diplomatic sanctions, including the ban on flights.

Declining to set a time-frame, Mr Singh, however, acknowledged that Gen Musharraf's stated intent — to not permit the use of Pakistani territory to foster

terrorist activity abroad — would "take time to operationalise", during which India would keep a close watch for positive signs. And

900 held in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 13. — A night after President Gen Pervez Musharraf banned five terrorist and sectarian outfits, police today arrested their leaders and sealed offices of the groups in Lahore and Karachi in full glare of the state television. Reports said nearly 900 militants were held in the crackdown across the country.

The Pakistan Television showed police sealing offices of the five outfits, including those of Jaish and Lashkar. It, however, did not put out any consolidated figure of those rounded up. Unofficial reports said over 400-900 militants were taken into custody.

Pakistan has not officially reacted to the cautious welcome India gave to Gen Musharraf's speech. However, PTV said India had reacted positively to the speech. — PTI

though "the lack of action against (20) fugitives from law about whom detailed information has been provided ... is disappointing", the bottomline is that India

would "expect Pakistan to cooperate ... in stopping all infiltration cross the International Border and the LoC".

This didn't happen despite Gen Musharraf's speech last night, when firing across the LoC intensified. "This is precisely why we are cautious," Mr Singh said. "While there is a correlation between the speech and de-escalation of troops (and tensions), we will wait and give time to see how far the gap between intent and action taken is closed." India also remained hopeful of some action against the list of "fugitives from the law" of whom around 15 are Indians.

The US secretary of state called Mr Singh this morning, as did the Russian foreign minister, Mr Igor Ivanov. US President Mr George W Bush, too, spoke to Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee and "appreciated" India's response to President Musharraf's address.

A statement from 10 Downing Street, welcoming "President Musharraf's outright condemnation and rejection of terrorism in all its forms," hoped "India will respond positively." He said India welcomed the decision to ban the LeT and the JeM, "no matter what has impelled Gen Musharraf to do so".

"There would be similar need to address other terrorist organisations targeting India," he added.

THE STATESMAN

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George to seek defence shield aid

Srinjoy Chowdhury in New Delhi

Jan. 15. — Exploring new strategic paths, India will ask the USA for help in its efforts to build an anti-missile defence system.

The need for such a system has become even more critical in the wake of the 11 September attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The defence delegation accompanying the defence minister, Mr George Fernandes, will discuss the issue with US officials. A senior defence ministry official said India would explore the possibility of US assistance in the building of a missile shield over India.

"The USA has pulled out of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. They have also spoken of sharing National Missile Defence technology with other countries. We will discuss the issue with them," a senior government official said. It would certainly be cheaper to get US help on the system, officials said.

Even asking the USA for such a system is a sign of a shift in Indo-US relations in recent months. During this trip there will be

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detailed discussions between the US undersecretary of defence, Mr Douglas Felth, and the Indian defence secretary, Mr Yogendra Narayan.

India is also working on an indigenous anti-missile system and considering acquiring anti-missile systems from Israel and Russia. The Israelis have already offered the Arrow anti-missile system for the defence of the capital, other metropolitan cities and strategic locations like nuclear reactors as well as the accompanying Green Pine radars while the Russians have long offered the S-300V and technological help.

Among the other issues to be discussed are engines for the Light Combat aircraft, radars, maritime aircraft, jet engines and components for jet trainers.

A senior official said the acquisitions could be for short-term but a system built with foreign (whether Russian, American or Israeli) was a long-term effort. The Arrow anti-missile and anti-aircraft system can be used for the defence of the capital and other cities. This anti-missile system can hit incoming missiles with missiles about 50 km away from the city it is protecting. The

missile can be effective even if it misses by 40 metres. The Russians first offered the S-300 PMU-1 about seven years ago. They said the system can destroy anything from low-level terrain-hugging cruise missiles, medium range-ballistic missiles and also aircraft. During the first demonstration for visiting Indian Army officials, the missile achieved 90 per cent hit probability.

Though the discussions with the USA on assistance in a missile defence system are at a very preliminary stage, defence analysts point out that even partial protection under an American umbrella might cut down the costs of India having to put its own systems in place. They, however, stress that the current possibilities pertain more to advanced systems and not what are being produced now.

When announcing its intention to scrap the ABM Treaty and develop NMD, the USA had said it was prepared to extend the benefits of its missile shield to other countries as well. That India was impressed by that offer might explain the somewhat muted Indian response to the Americans abandoning the treaty.

THE STATESMAN

13 JAN 2002

Army chief's statement a reflection of ground reality

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JAN. 12. The Chief of Army Staff, S. Padmanabhan's views on nuclear exchanges and his observations on the Army's state of preparedness occupied centre-stage at his interaction with the media on Friday. But his comments on the events leading to the forward deployment of troops and the Army's perception of the steps taken by Pakistan to curb militancy are also vital.

For, these are the first authoritative and forthright pronouncements on the two major developments by the Army since the September 11 strike in the U.S. and the December 13 attack on the Parliament House here.

The build-up at forward locations was conducted under the code name "Operation Parakram" which, he was at pains to point out, was qualitatively different from an exercise. "We don't play soldiers with frontline troops. In fact, nobody does that," the Army chief had explained.

The Pakistanis had provided the trigger soon after the September 11 attacks by mobilising some of its strike forces to forward locations ostensibly for an exercise. The seeds of distrust were sown after Pakistan's Director-General of Military Operations (DGMO) informed his Indian counterpart of the exercises only after he was specifically asked about the objective behind troop movement. No information was volunteered at the weekly telephonic conversation between the two DGMOs. In reply, India adopted a precautionary posture by putting "trip-wire forces" in position.

Although the Pakistani troops should have returned with the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan on November 17, most of them stayed back in the Chenab-Jhelum corridor which faces India's vulnerable Akhnoor-Chamb sector in Jammu and Kashmir.

In between, the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly was "given some attention" by terrorists and there was a simultaneous spurt in militant activity. Security agencies had also anticipated a degree of 'guided' trans-border movement of the fleeing Al-Qaeda ele-

ments into India.

"We still did not have more than a precautionary trip-wire force" but the December 13 attack on Parliament put India's 'war on terrorism' in high gear leading to what is the fastest and biggest deployment of the Indian Army in forward locations, said the Army chief.

The armed forces, he indicated, were sceptical of Pakistani efforts to close down training camps and arrest militants. Describing the moves as having had "no significant effect" on the ground, the

Army chief wondered whether it was not a cosmetic exercise.

According to intelligence inputs, a skeletal staff is manning most of the larger camps being run by the ISI. Trainee terrorists of foreign origin, particularly Afghans, had been attached to military units in groups of eight to 10 or asked to disperse to nearby villages.

He described the year 2001 as a very bad one in terms of both the number of incidents and militants killed.

Why Fernandes issued 'corrective' statement

By Harish Khare

NEW DELHI, JAN. 12. Why did the Government feel itself obliged to get the Defence Minister, George Fernandes, issue a sort of "corrective" statement within hours of the Chief of Army Staff, Gen. S. Padmanabhan's televised press conference on Friday? Initial reaction within and outside the armed forces was that the General had been gently rapped on the knuckles for perhaps speaking just a bit too much. Mr. Fernandes' statement also raised the question whether "foreign voices" had something to do with the last night's damage-limitation exercise.

Inquiries show that contrary to the general impression, Gen. Padmanabhan did not perform as part of any overall strategy of keeping up the diplomatic pressure. The General was having an on-the-evening-of-the-Army-Day date with the media, and it was entirely fortuitous that the televised press conference came a day before General Pervez Musharraf's much-awaited speech.

The Army Chief was adjudged, within the senior echelons of the Vajpayee Government, to have done an admirable job in "straight, tough and honest" talking. But it was also felt that Gen. Padmanabhan's formulations on the use of nuclear weapons were perhaps a bit too expansive.

It is learnt that the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, himself had not watched the Army chief's televised press conference; but his senior aides did and they were somewhat unsettled. Soon the flurry of international inquiries about India's nuclear's immediate intentions immediately alerted the senior officials to the need for some kind of explanation. It was felt that the General's formulations could needlessly divert attention away from New Delhi's central thrust in the current diplomatic offensive.

It was accordingly suggested to Mr. Fernandes that he should issue a statement of clarification. Hence the calming sentence: "I wish everyone gives up this talk of nuclear weapons being brought into play. The use of nuclear weapons is far too serious a matter that it should be bandied about in a cavalier manner". It is rather ironic that the Defence Minister himself has been much less careful in talking of the use of nuclear weapons.

Authoritative sources suggest that Mr. Fernandes' statement was not intended as a public rebuke for the Army chief. It was merely to calm down some international nerves because it is privately acknowledged that even Pakistan has been keen to be seen as restrained and responsible in talking about use of nuclear weapons.

250 Army trucks with ammo on fire

Statesman News Service

JAIPUR, Jan. 11. — An Army convoy of 250 trucks loaded with over 1,500 tonnes of ammunition caught fire in the Udasar area of Bikaner district today. Sixty trucks were gutted, two persons killed and eight injured. Their condition was stated to be critical. The death toll is likely to go up.

Till late tonight, district and Army officers were supervising fire-fighting operations. The fire broke out 10 km away from Bikaner town. Hundreds of people have been shifted to safer areas. As the bombs exploded, splinters hit several residential localities. At least six houses were damaged. The Army is trying to protect the oil and lubricant

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depot located near the site of the accident.

Official sources said a civilian truck, hired by the Army to transport arms and ammunition, caught fire at 3.15 pm. It soon spread to other trucks standing nearby. It's feared that some drivers were trapped. The national highway to Bikaner has been closed to traffic.

Mr George Fernandes tonight ordered an inquiry. He will visit Bikaner tomorrow.

The Chief Minister, Mr Ashok Gehlot, said the cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained.

This is the third time that Army ammunition has caught fire in this region. The previous accidents occurred in Bharatpur and Suratgarh.

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'NO REDUCTION IN TERRORIST ACTIVITIES IN J&K'

Army ready for war, says Chief

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J. D & N Security

Statesman News Service

NEW DELHI, Jan. 11. — The Army is "close to actual war" and "fully ready" for it, the Army chief, General S Padmanabhan, said today at a press conference, adding that India has a "sufficiency of nuclear weapons."

Stating that the situation on the border was serious, but refusing to speculate on when war would break out and of what kind it would be, whether limited or longer, Gen Padmanabhan said: "We are close to actual war. But war doesn't happen like that. The government decides whether it wants war or not." "A lot of viable options (beginning from a strike on the camps to a full conventional war) are available. We can do it... If we go to war, jolly good. If we do not, we shall live (with it)," he said.

For the normally media-shy Army chief, it was an assured performance and it sent a strong message to Pakistan. Asked if India would lose credibility if the Army disengaged after being on the brink of war, he said: "What is the aim of deployment? Is it awe-inspiring? Is it to tell other countries we have had enough?" He suggested that there was considerable talk in Washington DC, London and Beijing about averting a war. "See what it leads to... My business is to see that it (the deployment) furthers the government's aim." While he did not say so in as many words, he appeared to suggest that the threat of war could be as effective as war itself. The presence of US troops in Pakistan could also "inhibit a lot" of military operations against Pakistan. The USA, he said, would not want a war.

Asked about a limited conventional war, he said "Conceptually, all things are possible," adding that the situation today

was different from the time before the 1965 war. Speaking about the possibility of a nuclear war, he said nuclear weapons were not meant for "war-fighting." He said India and Pakistan were not alone in the world. It would be disastrous for the entire



'I'm a man of peace, but this man can bite': Gen Padmanabhan in New Delhi on Friday. — AP/PTI

region, for the West and countries in the East, dependent on oil, and the entire Central Asian region. Any national leader would have to take the hue and cry, that would happen in case nuclear weapons were used, into account.

"If he is man enough or mad enough, he must use it," he said. If any nuclear

weapons were used against Indian soldiers, ships... the continuation of the existence of Pakistan as a nation would be in doubt, he said. Pakistan's nuclear policy doesn't rule out a first strike — the use of tactical nuclear weapons in a battlefield.

India, he said, was ready for a second strike and there was "a sufficiency of nuclear weapons." He said: "We've enough." The troop build-up along the border and the Line of Control (an estimated 7-8 lakh), he said, was not there for an exercise. They are there to defend the country and the Lord is on the side of the big battalions, a reference to the Indian Army's size — twice that of the Pakistani army's. "This is not an exercise. We don't play at soldiers with frontline troops," he said, adding that deployment was complete. Explaining the situation, he said that the Army had placed a trip-wire force after the attack on the World Trade Center and Pakistan army exercises, partly in anticipation of movement of terrorists from Afghanistan to India via Pakistan or PoK, but after the 13 December attack, troops were slowly built up.

Asked about the Chinese angle, he said General Musharraf, may have visited China, but India has steady relations with Beijing and the supply of five shiploads of F-7 fighter planes would not make much difference militarily. It takes a while to incorporate such equipment into the military system. He won't talk about the deployment of minefields or of the Agni medium-range missile.

Despite the arrest of terrorist leaders and Pakistan's ban on some outfits, there has been no reduction in terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir, the Army chief said. Putting "these gentlemen" in "guest

Turn to page 3

REGISTRATION

2001 02

Delhi adds war drums to diplomacy chorus

FROM SUJAN DUTTA

New Delhi, Jan. 11: Indian army chief General S. Padmanabhan said the forces are ready at battle stations and prepared to go to war with Pakistan if the political leadership gives the nod.

"Yes. Affirmative. Complete. Ready," the general said, when asked if the mobilisation and deployment were over.

The army chief's unequivocal statements propelled the might of the Indian military machine into the barrel of a diplomatic offensive. But his comments on the nuclear issue created a flutter in the security and diplomatic establishment, forcing defence minister George Fernandes to issue a clarification later (See Page 10).

India's military is two-and-a-half to three times the size of Pakistan's. This time, India is not fighting shy of military muscle-flexing. Indeed, it is advertising the fact. The army chief said he was acutely aware of moving forces under the glare of the world's eyes.

"The situation on the border can comfortably be described as 'serious'... there is no tension in the army, just professional confidence... conceptually, scope exists for a limited, conventional war," Padmanabhan said.

Addressing the world's media in one of the most candid interactions by a serving army chief, Padmanabhan said the forces were primed for an offensive.

His statements, timed just before

President Pervez Musharraf's speech, were open to interpretations. At one level, it was clear that India and Pakistan are closest to a war since Kargil. At another, Padmanabhan was only adding more fat to the fire of "coercive diplomacy".

"There is no question of war. Nobody makes a speech before going to war. I do not think the army chief was taking a hawkish position. He was just explaining things the way he saw it," said analyst Major General (retd) Afsir Karim.

Padmanabhan, who is also chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, said the possibility of a conflict snowballing into a nuclear war was not inevitable given the international scenario.

"Nuclear weapons are not meant for war-fighting. We have



General S. Padmanabhan at the news conference. (AFP)

a clearly enunciated nuclear doctrine of no first strike. Pakistan, on the other hand, has stated that it can use nuclear weapons... Should they be man enough — correction, mad enough — to use nuclear weapons against India, its military or economic assets, the perpetrators of that outrage shall be punished so severely that their continuation in any form or fray will be doubtful... Yes, we have the capability of second strike."

One of the inhibiting factors, he said, was the presence of American troops in the subcontinent. "On the other hand, when two wild bulls decide to fight in the jungle, they don't care."

The army chief said he did not anticipate India being caught in tensions of two fronts — the second being along the borders with China. "I trust the peace and tranquillity agreement of 1993 will ensure peace and tranquillity with China," he said.

The army chief said the mobilisation of the forces this time was on a much higher scale than that during Operation Brasstacks (1986-87), in effect meaning that this was the largest ever deployment of troops by India.

"This is not an army exercise. We are preparing for war," he said. The transportation and deployment have been codenamed Operation Parakram, the military objective of which "was the better defence of the nation".

THE TELEGRAPH

12 JAN 2002

Defence sale to sell Delhi's foreign policy

Keith Flory & Srinjoy Chowdhury
in New Delhi

Jan. 10. — The government's awakening to the potential for using the sale of military equipment to reinforce the foreign policy is likely to show in the 2002-03 Budget.

The outlay for defence is expected to make an allocation that will facilitate the extension of credit to the buyers of Indian arms and other military stores.

The move has a three-pronged objective. The most obvious being keeping full the order books of the ordnance factories and public sector undertakings under the defence ministry.

More subtle would be the bid to make the customer-nations rely heavily on India for their defence supplies and therefore more likely to support the diplomatic line of South Block.

Even more delicate would be an attempt to contain the impact — more politico-diplomatic than commercial — of China (and to an extent Pakistan) capturing a very large share of the market that is being targeted: the developing countries of South and South-East Asia.

Cited as examples of regional states that are coming under increasing Chinese sway, courtesy their arms purchases, are Myanmar, Vietnam, and even Nepal. With India supposedly "looking east", the vision of a proliferation of Chinese-equipped armed forces is not the prettiest of pictures.

The Union finance ministry is being persuaded to make budgetary provision for the extension of concessional credit to the buyers of Indian defence

stores, senior officials have confirmed. Such credit could help turn around the dismal export performance, a mere Rs 60 crore a year. Which translates into trivia in terms of the influence that serves as a bonus to military sales.

In recent times India has scrapped the policy by which the export of military equipment was deemed a political taboo — more so since there could no real guarantee of the end-user — but export efforts failed to take off. Despite Indian defence production units participating in arms-related trade fairs in the region. The lack of credit facilities was seen as a major stumbling block.

An export market is also deemed critical to the effort to attract private participation in the Indian defence production sector.

That market alone would make commercial sense of the heavy investment required to manufacture equipment that met the stringent quality/reliability standards of armed forces, anywhere.

Domestic orders were too small to attract private players and provide the economies of scale that would make the investment financially rewarding.

Joint-ventures and sales to third countries were mere pipe-dreams in the absence of easy finance for purchases from India.

Though a policy pronouncement throwing the defence sector open to private industry was made about a year ago, it was only last month that the final set of conditions and regulations were published. The response, according to top officials, has been encouraging. Credit facilities are expected to provide the thrust required for the overall exercise.

India aims to pull off a politico-diplomatic coup against China by capturing a large share of the latter's arms market in South and South-east Asia

THE STATESMAN

11 JAN 2002

Indian troops ready for war: Defence Ministry

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, January 9

THE MILITARY build-up on the country's northern and western fronts is now complete. "We're fully mobilised, and in a state of high alert," a Defence spokesman said. This completes the first stage of Operation Sangram, India's "war against terrorism".

The troops are poised, with their powder dry. "We await a political decision, either way," a Defence Ministry official said. The Chief of Army Staff, General Sundararajan Padmanabhan, visited the northern sector to review military preparedness on today

This is the biggest build-up on the Indo-Pak front, both in terms of force levels and firepower. Sources indicate that six corps of combat troops are in defensive positions to ensure rear area or hinterland security in the event of outbreak of hostilities. All three of India's strike corps, trained and equipped for offensive operations in enemy territory, too are mobilised, but sufficiently away from the border yet so as not to alarm the Pakistanis.

Three Army Commands - Northern, Western and Southern - are operationally in charge of the deployment, which is estimated to be to the tune of six to seven lakh troops, besides substantial military hardware. The operational headquarters of the Western and Southern Commands have been moved from their usual locations at Chandimandir and Pune respectively to positions closer to the border.

The extent of mobilisation is clear from the shifting of the headquarters of the Dimapur-based 3 Corps to the Western sector. The IAF too is on the qui vive. There is near-war-time preparedness in the fighter squadrons.

Mobilised formations are now awaiting instructions for Operation Prakram, a corps level exercise involving the Ambala-based 2 Corps. This is a strike formation with a high armour element. Sources indicate that the entire corps will be exercised in the Bikaner area to flex India's military muscle.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

10 JAN 2002

Soldiers guard landmines along the LoC.

India defends use of mines

Vishal Thapar
New Delhi, January 9

INDIA DOES not see any contradiction in its Jaipur foot diplomacy in Afghanistan and the use of landmines for the defence of its borders. The issue has pricked the conscience of the strategic community after three successive mishaps in the handling of landmines by Indian Army troops since December 25 left about 35 soldiers dead along the Ganganagar, Longewala and Attari stretches of the International Border with Pakistan.

This is for the first time since 1971 that landmines are being laid at select places along the Western Front. The mine laying is part of the measures to ensure rear area (hinterland) security during the on-going Operation Sangram — the war against terrorism.

Since the World War II, landmines have been used to delay the advance of enemy armoured formations during war. Along with the devastating anti-tank mines, anti-personnel mines — which blow off the limbs of a person stepping on them — are also laid to reinforce the minefield and deter the easy lifting of anti-tank mines by the enemy.

Over the years, the use of landmines, in particular anti-personnel mines, became widespread, especially by terrorists and insurgents. There has been growing international concern on civilian casualties in landmine blasts, leading to the

Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel mines.

While India supports an eventual ban on landmines, for the moment, it considers their use as a legitimate defence requirement. India wants the use of landmines restricted to the defence of borders till appropriate non-lethal alternatives are developed. It favours a "complete prohibition" on the use of landmines, booby traps and other such devices in internal armed conflicts.

Significantly, India has not used landmines before any war took a serious turn. It has not employed this weapon in its counter-insurgency operations, despite the frequent use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) — a landmine variant — in cross-border terrorism engineered against India. In fact, about 50 per cent casualties sustained by Indian security forces in counter-insurgency operations are IED-inflicted.

Making it clear that it intends to continue using landmines for long-term defence of its borders, India has not signed the Ottawa Convention as it "does not adequately address its security concerns". Countries like the US, Russia, China and Pakistan too have not joined the Convention.

India's humanitarian concerns over the issue are a victim's perspective and chief of Integrated Defence Staff Lt-General Pankaj Joshi, a landmine amputee, is the most visible Indian victim.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

10 JAN 2002

Pakistan drone wasn't shot down: Defence Ministry

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, January 7

HT-9
THE PAKISTANI pilotless spy plane which flew for over 15 minutes in Indian airspace on Sunday was not shot down, contrary to initial Indian claims. In fact, the Ministry of Defence is not even sure that the unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) was hit.

"There was an intrusion, and the Pakistani UAV was engaged by Indian air defence artillery. But it wasn't shot down. It may have been hit, but we're not sure. Unless you get the wreckage, you don't know what hap-

pened," officials in the Ministry of Defence conceded.

A serious view has been taken of the delay in "engaging" the surveillance aircraft for over 15 minutes after it was spotted. Sources indicated that the inaction resulted from "confusion over the identification of the pilotless aircraft as friend or foe". The IAF, which scrambled jet fighters in 1996 to shoot down a similar Pakistani drone, declined to comment whether the Pakistani spy plane was spotted on its radars.

The UAV hovered unchallenged over Indian military locations up to 10 km inside Indian

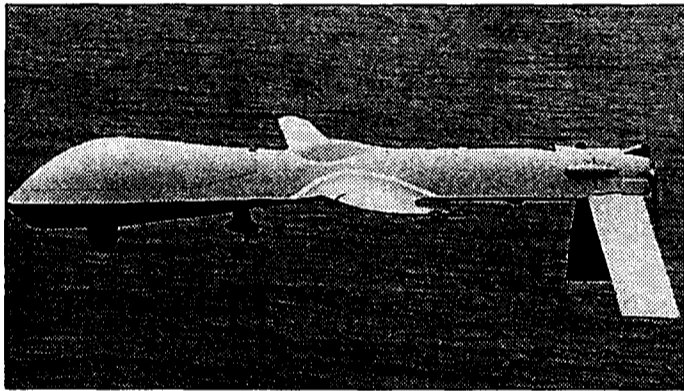
airspace, across the Betar Nullah in the Poonch sector, where there's significant troop deployment.

It was an embarrassing Sunday for the Indian Army, as its own UAV crashed soon after take-off at Chatta, 10 km from Jammu.

The UAVs are used for battlefield surveillance to provide commanders with high-resolution imaging to plan tactical strikes. The sensors, radars and cameras on board these remotely controlled aircraft fill in the blanks by providing real time images of rival formations, without the risks which a crew of a manned flight would incur.

Pakistan has an edge over India in UAVs. Its Vector Mk-2 model has a snooping range of about 200 km, a flight ceiling of 15,000 feet an endurance of up to eight hours, speed ranging from 75 km to 200 km per hour and a low radar signature. It also has the Nishan, Hornet, Bravo and Vision-1 variants.

India has the Israeli Hunter Searcher-1 UAVs, and a limited number of the indigenously produced Nishant. It was forced to import the Israeli Searcher-2 drones during the Kargil conflict.



A file photo of an unmanned aerial vehicle.

Fight against terrorism has entered a decisive phase: Advani

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JAN. 7. The Union Home Minister, L.K. Advani, today said there was no change in the attitude of "our neighbouring country" despite the just-concluded SAARC summit at Kathmandu expressing itself unanimously against terrorism.

Talking to presspersons on the eve of his visit to the U.S., Mr. Advani said that the world community must understand that so far as India was concerned, the fight against terrorism has entered a "decisive phase" after the December 13 terrorist attack on the Parliament House.

"Those who advise us to be calm and patient say attitudinal changes are taking place in Pakistan. But so far we see no signs of such changes in the attitude of our neighbour," he said.

He emphasised that the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, had already said that for India after December 13 terror strike, the battle against terrorism has entered a decisive phase. "This should be understood by the world community, particularly the democratic countries," he said.

Describing democracy as "the main enemy of terrorism", Mr. Advani said: "The global war against terrorism is not against any religion. It is not even a clash of civilisations. The fight is between the civilised society, which progresses freely, openly in a democratic manner, and those which are authoritarian. Other di-

mensions are also added to it but the main enemy of terrorism is democracy. We want the world community to understand and appreciate it."

Asserting that India had been waging the battle against terrorism on its own and would continue to do so in the days to come, Mr. Advani said that another kind of war (proxy-war) had been imposed on the country for the past two decades.

"The question is if we will tackle it the way we have been doing or is there any change required in our approach and responses. Whatever steps were taken by India in the post-December 13 scenario, none of these had been taken before," he said.

Mr. Advani said that his visit to the U.S. was taking place in the backdrop of a growing international opinion against terrorism. "We have to see how this growing sentiment against terrorism can be helpful to us as we have been facing this serious threat to our democracy for the past two decades," he said.

Recalling that he had last visited the U.S. almost a decade ago as the BJP president, Mr. Advani said it would be his first visit to the U.S. as Home Minister.

During his six-day long visit, he is scheduled to meet the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, and the U.S. Attorney-General, John Ashcroft. He is also likely to call upon the American President, George Bush, and the Vice-President, Dick Cheney, official sources said.

THE HINDU

8 JAN 2002

Repromulgated Poto

51-4 9-10-87 A fraud on the Constitution 81

Repromulgation of the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance with a few cosmetic changes can be questioned. While deletion of the draconian provision relating to failure to disclose information which could prevent the commission of a terrorist act and reducing the life of the legislation to three years are to be welcomed, any law to combat terrorism requires more attention than it has received. The original ordinance promulgated last November would have lapsed in the second week of January as the Bill to replace it could not be passed in the last session of Parliament convened. An ordinance is no substitute for law enacted by the legislature.

In the prevailing atmosphere, especially after the terrorist attack on Parliament House on 13 December, the President might have been persuaded to re-issue it. The main reason the Vajpayee government could not replace Poto by a Bill was the manner in which it was hastily promulgated in the first place on the eve of the winter session of Parliament instead of enlisting the support of opposition parties and introducing it in the form of a Bill. Branding anyone opposed to Poto as unpatriotic will not wash. Although an ordinance cannot be questioned in any court of law on any ground according to Article 123 and 213 of the Constitution, the Supreme Court, in the DC Wadhwa vs the Union of India case in 1987, ruled that repromulgation of ordinances in a routine manner is "a fraud on the Constitution and liable to be struck down". The recent Supreme Court verdict relating to Articles 75 and 164 of the Constitution that a minister could hold office for six consecutive months without being a member of Parliament or the legislature was a one-time exemption could perhaps be extended to Article 123 also and thereby bring an end to rule by ordinances.

THE STATESMAN

India steps up pressure

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, January 7

INDIA TODAY ruled out dialogue with Pakistan, saying there had been no change in Islamabad's stand on combating cross-border terrorism. External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh said after a Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) meeting that there could be no dialogue unless Pakistan changed its attitude.

Islamabad was told to take back by January 10 bodies of the five Jaish-e-Mohammad terrorists who got killed while trying to storm the Indian Parliament on December 13. The bodies would otherwise be disposed of, Delhi Police Commissioner Ajai Raj Sharma said today.

The CCS had its first meeting today after the Saarc Summit in Kathmandu.

Calling Pakistan's attitude as "regrettable" Jaswant Singh said it was maintaining double standards in its fight against terrorism.

"They do continue to maintain very different approaches when it is a matter of Western interest or Afghanistan and when it comes to the question of India or Jammu and Kashmir. This is not acceptable. We have



JASWANT SINGH

said so earlier. You cannot have one attitude with terrorism to west of Pakistan and an altogether different attitude to east of Pakistan," he said.

The CCS discussed the military build-up since the December 13, British Prime Minister Tony Blair's visit, the just-concluded Saarc Summit and other international developments.

Home minister LK Advani, Defence Minister George Fernandes and the three Service

Chiefs attended the meeting.

On the shooting down of a Pakistani unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), which had intruded into Indian airspace in Jammu and Kashmir, Singh said the aircraft was detected and shot down by Indian ground troops. The wreckage had fallen in PoK, he said.

Asked if India would protest the intrusion, he said the shooting down of the aircraft was an act of protest by itself. Reminded that J&K Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah had denied last night that the UAV had been shot down, he said the Chief Minister was not probably aware of the incident.

The situation along the border was tense as Islamabad was still backing cross-border terrorism, he said. On his meetings with Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar on the Saarc Summit fringe, Singh said he might have met Sattar half a dozen times but nothing substantial had been discussed.

On Pakistan's demand that India should provide evidence against the 20 terrorists and criminals it had named, Singh said, "We have given full evidence. There are Interpol red corner notices against the 20. It is regrettable that such statements still emanate from Pakistan".

"I wonder what is in the air and soil of Pakistan that criminals and terrorists are provided shelter there and the Government thereafter continues to say that we cannot take action against them," Singh said. He refused to say what New Delhi's next diplomatic move would be if Islamabad failed to handover the 20 terrorists.

Praising British Prime Minister Tony Blair's forthright views on terrorism, he said, "For India this is a very strong point." He also mentioned the New Delhi Declaration signed last night by Prime Ministers Vajpayee and Blair which categorically states that Britain would work towards ensuring that India got a permanent berth in the UN Security Council.



Jawans hitch a ride on a horse-drawn cart to reach a bunker in the R S Pura Sector near Jammu on Monday.

SIX BUTCHERED IN JAMMU, 16 WOUNDED

SIX MEMBERS of a minority community were killed and 16 wounded when terrorists struck on Monday at two villages in the Banihal area of Doda district. Terrorists threw grenades and fired from assault rifles at Lori and Sundwa Malingam near Ramsoo, 170 km north of Jammu. Four of those killed were members of the Village Defence Committee. Three of the victims, Bharat Singh, Charat Singh and Baldev Singh were killed in Sundwa Malingam village, while one VDC member, Baldev Singh, and two of his family members were killed at Lori. This was the third major massacre of minority community members in the past 10 days. Meanwhile, Indian and Pakistani troops exchanged heavy mortar and artillery fire along the LoC in the Poonch sector, forcing many villagers to flee their homes in areas close to borders. The shelling, which seemed to subside on Sunday, intensified after Indian ground troops shot down an unmanned spy plane that had strayed into Indian airspace. Immediately after the spy plane was shot down, the guns came alive all along the Poonch sector.

HTC, Jammu

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

8 JAN 2002

leaders than to genuine objective constraints.

Rule by Decree

✓
C/11/10
✓
The repromulgation of the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance after Parliament failed to ratify it in its last session is an abuse of democracy. The letter of the law may permit the sequential foisting of identical ordinances on to the statute books but what the BJP-led Vajpayee government has done is tantamount to stifling the spirit of the Constitution. Ordinances were conceived as temporary measures needed either to plug a legal hole or to enable a certain activity at a time when Parliament may not be in session. Once having promulgated an ordinance, governments are duty-bound to have them ratified on the floor of the House at the earliest opportunity. Knowing that it stood little chance of passing POTO in the Rajya Sabha, the BJP deliberately did not introduce the required law at the beginning of the last session as good faith dictated it should have. Instead, it waited till the fag end of the winter session, threatened a joint sitting of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha in order to ram the law through, and then decided that such a drastic method of enactment might boomerang on the party. No doubt the December 13 terrorist attack on Parliament helped the government proclaim a phony consensus and repromulgate POTO in the name of avoiding "contentious issues". But the fact remains that the draconian law should have been allowed the undignified death it deserved — and perhaps even been buried in one of those \$2500 aluminium coffins this government bought but has been unable to put to good use.

✓
As for the 'amendments' that have been introduced in POTO, these are far too paltry and inconsequential to merit serious consideration. If the government is willing to concede that clause 3(8) (making the disclosure of information a legal obligation) is liable to misuse, it is hard to understand why it has not agreed to delete the even more sweeping clause 14 as well. POTO's provisions on the seizure of property the police believe to be linked to terrorism violate principles of natural justice and have already led to the unwarranted harassment of at least one family in Kashmir. The law's bail provisions are problematic as is the power it grants the government to ban organisations as terrorist. In the case of the People's War Group and MCC, the government has taken the line that POTO gives it the right to maintain a secret hit list of 'front organisations' whose members can be targeted under the law whenever the police decide. At the best of times, flabbiness in law is a terrible thing. When it comes with one year of incarceration before bail can be granted, sloppy drafting is downright intolerable. Indeed, it is hard to escape the conclusion that its numerous flaws have quite deliberately been crafted into POTO precisely in order to allow the government maximum leeway to target ordinary citizens in the name of 'fighting terrorism'. We have argued this before and we argue it again. Terrorism is fought by intelligent policing and proper investigative procedures, not by sweeping laws. When Parliament reconvenes, MPs from all parties must ensure that POTO is defeated. /

THE TIMES OF INDIA

- 7 JAN 2002

'Nuclear wars are not meant to be fought, especially between nuclear powers'

Interview of the Week

GAURAV C. SAWANT meets ADMIRAL SUSHIL KUMAR

Even if we go for war, it will be for peace, says Admiral Sushil Kumar, who retired last week as the Chief of Naval Staff (CNS). Even as tensions continue to simmer between India and Pakistan mount and forces swell at the borders, Admiral Kumar cautions that a 'war is the final act only when all other options are exhausted'. Excerpts from the interview...

■ Do you foresee a war?

IF all other measures fail, only then will the government think of war. Presently, the government is exploring other measures like a diplomatic offensive, which I feel is the correct way to go. War is the final act only when all other options are exhausted. Presently, I agree we are going through a very torturous route but that is the path to take.

■ What is India's threshold?

THAT is for the government to decide. The armed forces do not decide the threshold level, we only follow orders. The government has shown tremendous restraint and the situation is very tense at the moment. Even if we do decide to go for war, the aim would be for peace.

■ Is retaliation against Pakistan the best way to deal with the situation?

PUNISHMENT is not the aim. Our aim is to prevent Pakistan from abetting cross-border terrorism. To blindly retaliate and seek vengeance will not solve the problem. We have to go in for a calibrated response and progress diplomatically first. The armed forces are and should remain the last resort. We have to continue the dialogue.

■ Do you think Pakistan will resort to a nuclear strike?

NUCLEAR wars are not meant to be fought, especially when both the nuclear powers are neighbours. The nukes are for negotiations, they are not weapons of war.



Punishment is not the aim. Our aim is to prevent Pakistan from abetting cross-border terrorism. To blindly retaliate and seek vengeance will not solve the problem

Pakistan has a professional armed force and they realise that even in case they do resort to a strike there will be retaliation. It would be lunacy for them to start one. In a nuclear strike, there are no winners.

■ Is the navy capable of delivering nuclear cargo?

I AM not in a position to answer that question.

■ What is your assessment of the Pakistani armed forces and its navy?

THEY are a professional armed force and are prepared but so are we. We have been prepared for any eventuality since Kargil. Pakistan has acquired French submarines but on the maritime front we will

take control of the situation in a decisive manner. While their submarines might pose a challenge but our submarines, surface ships and air force are very strong and will dominate.

■ Will there be joint operations even in case of a limited conflict?

THE way I see it, any operation undertaken will be a joint effort. Take the example of Operation Enduring Freedom. It is an extremely well-coordinated sea borne, air and ground attack. For any operation to be a success, the three services have to work in close coordination. We have been undertaking integrated operations and this has a force multiplying effect. Joint operations are like a football game where team work is

more important for achieving the aim than just individual brilliance.

■ But the army feels the air force is unable to deliver. In fact after Kargil, the then Army chief General Ved Malik wrote that IAF bombs fell harmlessly on mountains or killed their own troops.

IT is incorrect to criticise any force as there are bound to be such actions in the fog of war. Actually war is a very fluid situation and it is wrong to believe that the IAF erred tactically. These are certain risks that have to be taken and are a part of occupational hazards. The US which has the most sophisticated equipment dropped bombs on Red Cross depots in Afghanistan apart from schools and hospitals. Even US troops were killed in friendly fire.

■ Will the US naval presence in the Arabian Sea pose a problem?

THE US presence is certainly confusing the maritime picture. The presence of neutral combat force blurs the situation. It becomes difficult to distinguish between a friend, foe and a neutral combat force. In maritime warfare weaponry and sensors are both long range. The enemy is targeted beyond visual range (BVR) and engagement is often over the horizon. The presence of other maritime powers in the Arabian Sea is resulting in a very confused situation at sea.

■ Why has the integration process been delayed? We still do not have a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)?

THERE are no hitches. The process is on and the tri-services Andaman and Nicobar command is already in place. The headquarters has been set up and by late this year we should have a CDS. I have recommended to the government that the system to be a success needs a CDS in place. It does not matter whether he is from the army, navy or the air force. There should be a CDS by this year.

Govt tab on border phones

DoT to monitor STD, ISD calls from eight districts

HT Correspondent
Kolkata, January 5

THE UNION Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has asked the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) to closely monitor all STD and ISD calls made from the districts of West Bengal bordering Bangladesh. An order to this effect was communicated to West Bengal Telecom Circle last week.

The districts mentioned in the directive are: South and North 24-Parganas, Nadia, Murshidabad, Malda, Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling. "We received the directive at around the same time that the PCOs in the border areas of Jammu & Kashmir were closed down. We have also been directed to closely monitor all internet cafes. We have taken the necessary measures," a senior telecom official told Hindustan Times. The State

police have also been asked to lend a helping hand.

"The directives were issued last week after we received Intelligence reports that some terrorist gangs with Pakistani links would step up their activities in border districts of the State, especially North Bengal. Since there is no immediate threat from that front, we haven't as yet asked the DoT to close down the PCOs and internet booths there, as in the western sector. We are monitoring the situation very closely and will take appropriate action when required," said a top-ranking officer of the MHA from New Delhi. The MHA directives also include a thorough scrutiny of all mobile phone users in the State.

"We have already started working in this regard. We have asked the cellular service providers to scrutinise their

customers' backgrounds and monitor the calls being made, especially long-distance calls. Some guidelines have been laid down for them since it would not be possible for them to keep a watch on all the customers," said the telecom official. PCO operators have also been asked to remain vigilant and report on people making calls to Bangladesh, Pakistan and Middle East.

"Public internet booths have also been asked to be on the lookout for unknown people. At our end also, we are keeping a tab on overseas calls. But internet traffic is difficult to monitor and if the situation worsens, we may be asked to snap internet links. That'll be under an extreme situation, but we are nonetheless preparing for that," he added.

But mere monitoring of call made from PCOs may not be

enough, feel Army officers. "As the latest arrest of the ISI operatives from North Bengal have shown, private phones could also be used to make STD or ISD calls. That's something that'll be difficult to monitor. The only way would, perhaps, be to cut off ISD facilities from all private phones," an Army officer said.

"That's something we're not contemplating at the moment. If we receive directions, we'll do so. But even so, there's no fool-proof way of ensuring that spies, anti-socials, terrorists or militants cannot remain in touch with their contacts in other parts of the country or abroad. They can use satellite phones that are very difficult to monitor and there are many other simpler ways to get around the restrictions we put in place," said the telecom official.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

6 JAN 2002

Centre okays 26 per cent FDI in defence, 100 per cent in housing

Times News Network

NEW DELHI: The government on Friday allowed up to 26 per cent foreign direct investment in the defence industry sector and 100 per cent FDI in the housing sector. However, the government said that despite the 26 per cent FDI in the defence sector, it would be mandatory that the management of those companies seeking licences to produce arms and ammunition be in Indian hands, with the majority representation on the board as well as the chief executive being resident Indians.

This forms a part of the detailed guidelines issued by the government on Friday following its earlier decision to allow 100 per cent private investment in the defence industry sector.

In the housing sector, the government finally gave its nod to 100 per cent FDI for the development of integrated townships, including housing. It also includes commercial premises, city and regional-level urban infrastructural facilities like roads and bridges, hotels, resorts, mass rapid transit systems and manufacture of building materials.

The guidelines issued by the depart-

More building blocks

- ▶ Land with for peripheral services like milk booths and police stations would have to be handed to the government or local authority.
- ▶ Playgrounds and parks would have to be made available to the local authorities free of cost after they are developed by the developer.
- ▶ The developer would retain the land for community services such as schools, shopping complexes, etc., and their services would be developed and made operational before the houses are occupied.

ment of industrial policy and promotion, said the minimum capitalisation norm would be \$10 million for a wholly-owned subsidiary and \$5 million for joint ventures with an Indian partner or partners.

A minimum lock-in period of three years from the completion of minimum capitalisation would apply before repatriation of original investment was permitted.

Until now, the defence industry was

strictly restricted to the public sector, although the government also imported armaments worth hundreds of crores from foreign manufacturers. The government had also lifted the ban on middlemen or agents in defence deals recently to make the system more transparent.

According to the new guidelines, licence applications for the production of arms and ammunition will be given by the department of industrial policy and promotion in the ministry of commerce and industry in consultation with the defence ministry. The cases which involve FDI will also be considered by the foreign investment promotion board (FIPB).

The applicant will have to be an Indian company or partnership firm, with the government reserving the right to verify the antecedents of foreign collaborators and domestic promoters. For foreign collaborators, preference would be given to original equipment manufacturers or design establishments that have a good track record of past supplies to the armed forces, space and atomic energy sectors and those having an established R&D base.

ISI ring busted in Siliguri, agent held with maps

HT Correspondents
Siliguri/ Kolkata, January 4

THE DARJEELING police today arrested Mohammed Dilshad, alias Raju, an ISI agent sent by the Pakistani intelligence outfit to India to collect information on key Army installations and military movement in North Bengal.

Dilshad hails from Hyderabad in Sind, Pakistan. The 32-year-old Pakistani was caught near the Darjeeling More, soon after he stepped out of his home to make an ISD call to his contacts. The Army teamed up

with the State and Central Intelligence agencies to nab the spy. After hours of grilling, Dilshad gave the names of his contacts in India. Among them was a senior Army officer and a man who served in the Army's 5033 ASC as attendant to the Royal Veterinary Corps.

A raid at the ISI man's home — behind a shoe shop near Alupatti on Hill Cart Road — yielded grid maps of important Army installations at Binnaguri and Sukhna. Details on movement of Army vehicles and photographs of key civil installations too were recovered apart

from 500 gm of RDX. Shots of New Jalpaiguri Railway station, an Indian Oil station, the Coronian and Sewak Bridges, a digital camera, floppies, two exposed film rolls and a diary containing phone numbers of ISI contacts in Dubai and Pakistan were found in the raid.

After today's interrogation session got over, the police picked up four of Dilshad's accomplices. One of them was Mohammed Azad, who works for the Army's Royal Veterinary Corps. Azad had access to information on military movements from Sukhna canton-

ment. Others arrested were Azad's brother, Mohammed Shehazad, Harish Goel and Mohammed Salim.

Dilshad, who claims to have a house near Hyderabad's (Pakistan) Shalimar Theatres, has also named Razi Khan, who entered the country with him. Khan is probably holed up in the Andhra Pradesh capital now. Darjeeling Police superintendent Sanjay Chander said he had alerted the Hyderabad Police.

Military Intelligence officers claimed that Dilshad was collecting information on the 33 Corps based in Sukhna, "forma-

tion signs" under the Eastern Command, heads of different divisions under the corps and the Hashimara Airbase.

Dilshad even had copies of letters senior Army officers sent to the Railways for special trains that would carry their men and machines from New Jalpaiguri to the northern part of the country.

Trained by Major Ahmed, Col Khatak and Subedar Gul Mohammed in his hometown, Dilshad slipped into India through the Wagah border and reached Siliguri in September 2000. On the way, he touched

Delhi and Mumbai. After reaching Siliguri, Dilshad headed for Darjeeling where he stayed for a month, collecting inputs on Army movements and on important civil installation on the way to Darjeeling.

He returned to Siliguri went house hunting. It was then that he met two brothers, who run a shoe-shop on Hill Cart Road. They helped him put up at a sleazy guest house for some months before offering him a room behind the shoe shop. This was in November 2000.

What made matters difficult

for the intelligence agencies was Dilshad taking a Hindu name — Raju. The shoe-shop owner had a driver by the same name and he too stayed at the same place with Dilshad. Soon enough, neighbours got suspicious of Dilshad. It was then that he married the shop owner's daughter. He has confessed being a Pak spy.

Dilshad had a personal telephone, but always stepped out to make overseas calls. The information was passed on to ISI agents in Pakistan through their counterparts in Dubai. Sleuths have recovered an Indian ration card from him.

9. D & N Sleuths

XNA

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

5 JAN 2001

Border ban on STD booths

FROM M. RAJENDRAN

9-D B N. Srinivas

New Delhi, Jan. 3: The Centre is shutting down public phone booths offering long-distance call facilities and Internet cafes in the border districts of Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat, widening a clampdown that began in Jammu and Kashmir.

"The letters have been sent to district magistrates in the three states to take immediate action for closing down PCOs (public call offices) with STD/ISD services. They will coordinate with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) and private operators," a home ministry official said.

The campaign, spurred by security concerns, is being intensified despite an indication by co-

mmunications minister Pramod Mahajan today that the controversial closure order in Jammu and Kashmir would be reviewed.

Sources in BSNL, too, said the home ministry had approached them on the feasibility of widening the STD/ISD booth ban to new areas which the ministry felt were "sensitive".

"A few places in Rajasthan, Punjab and Gujarat will be affected. The PCOs and Internet cafes will be asked to close shop and their connections will be cut. We are awaiting the list of places where PCOs and Internet cafes will have to be closed," a BSNL official said.

"Customers will suffer but we are helpless since the company is bound by the directives of the government and it is an issue

G-1 All

of national security," he added.

Mahajan said during the day that the government had "enough reasons" for restricting PCO users from making STD and ISD calls.

Officials said private operators will also be affected as they are present in these three states.

A senior executive of one of the telecom companies said: "We had jammed all calls to Pakistan soon after the December 13 attack and we will follow whatever steps are needed to be taken in the interest of national security."

Communications ministry sources pointed out that licence conditions allow the government to ask operators to jam calls or hand over facilities to official agencies whenever securi-

ty considerations demand so.

BSNL officials said these measures would help check flow of information to terrorist groups as well as foreign intelligence agencies.

But they added that "terrorists or spies can use other sophisticated means like satellite phones which are difficult to track. They can also travel to those areas where the ban does not exist to transmit information".

The only way to counter this is to closely monitor telecom networks and Internet traffic. This requires more personnel and sophisticated tracking equipment, which the government would find difficult to instal fast.

■ Ban outrage, Page 7

■ North Bengal curb, Page 9

THE TELEGRAPH

4 JAN 2002

THURSDAY, JANUARY 3, 2002

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POTO II 10-10 8/1

WHILE THE PROMULGATION of POTO was greeted with a censorious bang, its repromulgation has met with little more than a critical whimper. This may be a result of the country's preoccupation with tensions along the western border. It could also be due to political apprehension that keeping up the strong offensive against POTO in these charged and turbulent times — that were precipitated by the chilling attack on Parliament House on December 13 — could send out signals that are counter-productive or likely to be totally misunderstood. It is a measure of such concerns that the Opposition, while remaining wedded to its opposition to POTO, has been careful to avoid criticising its application — particularly with respect to those arrested for their alleged involvement in the December 13 conspiracy.

Nevertheless, the renewal of POTO, which has been altered slightly with a few deletions and modifications, raises two important questions. The first relates to the very act of repromulgation itself. The argument that POTO was not repromulgated since the newer version varies with the earlier one does not wash. The alterations made are largely minor or cosmetic and so POTO II cannot, by any stretch of imagination, be construed as a fresh ordinance. Having got the classificatory issue out of the way, the question shifts to the appropriateness of repromulgating the ordinance. Rule by successive ordinances goes directly against the constitutional grain. More than two decades ago, in the *Wadhwa v. State of Bihar* case, the Supreme Court ruled that repromulgation of ordinances in a routine manner would constitute a fraud on the Constitution and that any such repromulgated ordinance was liable to be struck down.

The Union Government's only defence for repromulgating POTO is that the circumstances under which it was done were far from routine. Specifically, that the legislative failure in enacting a statute in place of the ordinance stemmed

wholly and directly from the extraordinary circumstances which led to the curtailment of the last session of Parliament by common agreement. There is some truth or merit in this defence. But it begs an important question. One of the many legitimate criticisms of the BJP Government's handling of POTO is the manner in which it was hastily rushed through — as an ordinance and not a Bill. If the Centre had adopted the latter route, there may have been no need to take recourse to the questionable and legally suspect practice of keeping POTO alive by issuing successive ordinances.

The other question relates to the changes in POTO II. All the alterations have been incorporated in the face of the intense criticism that the Centre was subject to regarding the original ordinance. The harsh provision relating to the failure to disclose information which could prevent the commission of a terrorist act — a requirement which could have been horribly misused, not merely against journalists as feared in some quarters but against virtually anyone — has been deleted. A safeguard has been built into the powers to forfeit the proceeds of terrorism and the life of the proposed legislation has been reduced to three years from the original five. Such modifications may render POTO a tad less harsh, but they do not alter its basic character — one that raises fundamental questions which pertain to its draconian nature, the curtailment of civil liberties and the possible abuse of extraordinary powers. Unfortunately, until now, the political debate on POTO has been cynical and self-serving — characterised by a desire to score political points rather than a commitment to seriously examine the provisions of the proposed law. Both the Government and the Opposition were responsible for politicising the debate on POTO. It can only be hoped that when POTO is placed before Parliament after it reconvenes, the debate on the need for a new terrorism legislation will generate much more light rather than just plenty of heat.

THE HINDU

- 3 JAN 2002

No weapon will be spared in self-defence: PM

311 By J. P. Shukla

LUCKNOW, JAN. 2. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today said all military options were open in India's war against terrorism.

Addressing an Arya Pratinidhi Sammelan here, Mr. Vajpayee, said no weapon would be spared in self-defence. Whatever weapon was available, it would be used no matter how it wounded the enemy. India was a worshipper of peace but if the situation demanded, it was always ready to fight. "Ham shanti ke pujari hain, par awashyakata padne par dhanushdhari hain," he said.

The attack on Parliament was not only an attack on a building made of cement and mortar, but an attack on the heart of India. This kind of an attack was different from killing a few persons, he said.

Referring to the world's reac-

tion to the whole issue, Mr. Vajpayee said that when India conducted nuclear tests there was adverse reaction from other countries. But in self-defence no weapon would be spared. While India wanted peace, it was capable of being fierce, if needed. It was time it gave a reply to Pakistan, he added.

Blaming Pakistan squarely for supporting terrorism, Mr. Vajpayee said, "Terrorism is the state policy of Pakistan." Whatever steps it had recently taken for curbing terrorism were not enough.

Rejecting Pakistan's demand for proof against terrorist organisations functioning from its territory, he asked, "Why was it that the terrorists came from Pakistan? Whose hand was behind the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament?" It was strange that the same people were demanding proof. Even documents recovered

from the slain terrorists proved their links with Pakistan.

He said it had been well-established before the world community that Pakistan had committed treachery and deceived India. But it was better to be deceived than to deceive, Mr. Vajpayee said.

Pakistan had no alternative but to fight terrorism. Since it was part of the international community which was fighting a war against terrorism, it must take the steps which the international community had taken.

The present terrorist attacks generated from religious fanaticism, which never made distinctions.

To attack on the sly and create bigotry was madness. Now India would have to face this situation with all its determination. This was the last battle against terrorism and India would see that now the menace was defeated forever.

THE HINDU

3 JAN 2002

PM consults his predecessors

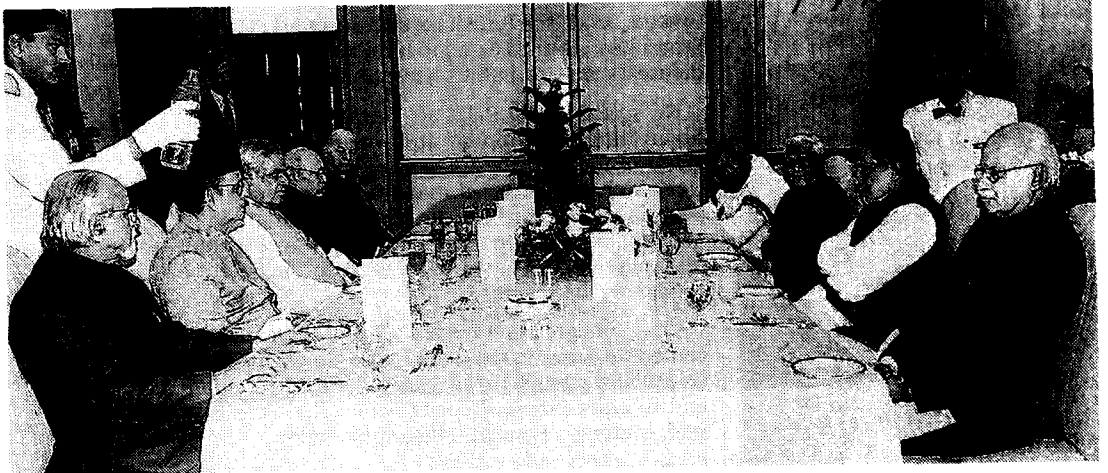
By Harish Khare

NEW DELHI, JAN. 1. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today sought consultation with the former Prime Ministers and a former President on the fast-changing geo-strategic situation after the December 13 attack on Parliament House. Besides the former President, Mr. R. Venkataraman, those who attended the luncheon gathering at the Prime Minister's residence were Mr. V.P. Singh, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, Mr. H.D. Deve Gowda and Mr. I.K. Gujral.

The leaders learnt about what the Government has done so far to meet the terrorists' challenge. They were also told about the diplomatic efforts being made to make Pakistan see reason. The Union Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, was also present.

This was the first time such an interaction took place, and one of the former Prime Ministers is reported to have jokingly suggested to Mr. Vajpayee that it could become an annual affair. However, there was no talk of the former Prime Ministers leading delegations to various countries as part of the suggested "diplomatic offensive."

Today's move is being described as part of a larger exercise being undertaken by the Vajpayee regime to mobilise domestic



The Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, at a luncheon meeting with his predecessors and the former President, Mr. R. Venkataraman (third from right), at his residence in New Delhi on Monday. From left are: Mr. I.K. Gujral, Mr. V.P. Singh and Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, the Principal Secretary to the PM, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, Mr. H.D. Deve Gowda, Mr. Chandra Shekhar and the Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani.

opinion behind the Government. Mr. Vajpayee last week held detailed interaction with the leaders of the leading political parties where the Government apparently received the Opposition's endorsement for its tough approach.

Nonetheless, at least two of the luncheon guests — Mr. Chandra Shekhar and Mr. Deve Gowda — have publicly cautioned the Vajpayee Government against beating the war drums a bit too loudly.

However, while the Government did not discuss its future options with the former Prime Ministers, one of the participants came back with the impression that considerable store was being set by the American pressure on Islamabad. The arrest of extremists by the Musharraf regime is being appreciated. The possibility of extreme action of an armed conflict appear to have dimmed considerably, just as the option of "hot pursuit" is not considered as a feasible proposition at all.

Another participant came back with the impression that there could still be "opportunities" for the Prime Minister and the Pakistani President during the SAARC summit later this week in Kathmandu, especially now that it appears that Mr. Vajpayee is going to stay for the entire summit. While formal "negotiations" are certainly not part of the script, no one should be surprised if the two leaders end up having an informal tete-a-tete, especially during the "retreat".

THE HINDU

- 2 JAN 2002

STD, ISD ^{NGA} services banned in J&K PCOs

HT Correspondent ^{MI}
Jammu, January 1

ISD, STD and Internet services provided at local telephone booths in Kashmir have been withdrawn since midnight. But no such curbs have been imposed on residents using the facilities. STD facilities in the border areas of the State had already been withdrawn a week ago.

The recent arrest of al-Qaida activist Raja Qamar Ayub has led the State security agencies to believe that terrorists have been interacting with their bosses via the Internet.

Though telecom authorities are reluctant to spell out the reasons behind the suspension of the services, sources said the decision has been taken at the behest of the Ministry of Defence. The ban has been imposed to stop ISI agents from passing on sensitive information, sources said.

As many as 250 phone booths would be affected. It is estimated that the suspension of the services will drastically affect the sales at these outlets having a turnover of Rs 6-7 lakh per day.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

- 2 JAN 2002

Ultras attack Army camp

**Statesman News Service
& Agencies**

CHANDIGARH/JAMMU, Jan. 1. — Militants today shot dead three jawans and injured four after ambushing their vehicle at Dangu Pir in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh bordering Punjab, police said.

Three militants were waiting near a firing range, 90 km from Dharamsala in Himachal, in thick fog to ambush a vehicle carrying an advance party of 5-mechanised infantry going from Mamoon Cantonment in Pathankot to the range to fix targets for routine practice, the sources said.

As the advance party arrived, the ultras fired rockets from a mountain top and opened

indiscriminate fire killing two jawans on the spot and wounding four, one of whom succumbed on the way to hospital, officials in Jammu said.

The militants escaped into the forests taking advantage of the fog cover.

The Army and police immediately launched combing operations and cordoned off the entire area to track down the militants. The SSP of Punjab's Gurdaspur district, Mr Lok Nath Angra, said Punjab Police was carrying out search operations in the villages around the range. The Himachal Pradesh authorities are also conducting combing operations.

Security forces recovered 80 empty cartridges, one grenade and four magazines from the scene, the police said. This is the

first attack in Kangra belt of Himachal Pradesh.

The Himachal Pradesh Governor, Mr Suraj Bhan, and the chief minister, Mr Prem Kumar Dhumal, condemned the attack and expressed their sympathies for the affected families.

Today's terrorist strike came a less than a month after a 30-hour joint operation by the Army and the police had failed to track down two bearded armed youths who were spotted near the Firing Range on 6 December 2001.

The Himachal Armed Police have fanned out in the remote Salle forest near the Chamba district, bordering the Doda district, following reports that an unknown person was seen carrying food for eight to 10 people in the forest area.

THE STATESMAN

— 2 JAN 2002

Militants strike at Pathankot firing range, kill 2 jawans

Times News Network

PATHANKOT: Two army jawans were killed and four others injured when militants attacked them at a firing range near Chakki Bridge here on Tuesday morning. The militants escaped into the nearby Damtal forests under cover of a thick fog.

The area falls on the border of this cantonment town of Punjab with Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh.

According to an eyewitness, jawans of the 5 Mechanised Infantry and the 12 Grenadiers had gone to the firing range to set targets as exercises were on. Around 8.30 a.m., three militants armed with AK-47 rifles attacked the unarmed jawans. While naik Hari Dutt Kaushal (35) and subedar Ram Pal (40) were killed on the spot, subedar R.K. Dutta, subedar Sita Ram, havaldar Durga Dutt and sepahi Anil Kumar were injured. The injured were admitted to the Pathankot military hospital.

Immediately after the attack, the Army, along with the Punjab and Himachal Pradesh police, launched a combing operation. The entire forest area has been cordoned off. However, the operation was being hampered by the dense fog and the

hilly terrain.

Talking to The Times News Network, an Army officer, Col H.C. Himalayan, said tangible results could be achieved only after six to eight hours.

Sources said the dog squad had found a grenade at the incident site. They also said that the same group of militants had been accosted by a person who had gone to the forest to pick wood on December 6.

Meanwhile, militants killed six members of a family from a minority community, among them an infant and an eight-year-old, at Mangnard village in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday evening.

A group of militants barged into the house of ex-serviceman Khetar Pal, asked his family to step out, lined them up and shot them with automatic weapons.

Agencies said the militants belonged to the Lashkar-e-Toiba. This was the second attack on the minority community in the last three days in the Rajouri-Poonch belt. On Saturday, militants had killed four members of a family in Kathal in Rajouri.

In another incident in the Rajouri sector, the army foiled two infiltration bids near the Line of Control.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

2002

Judicial custody of Afroze extended till January 15

Times News Network

MUMBAI: Judicial custody for Mohammed Afroze (26), the alleged operative of Al Qaida who was booked for sedition charges, was on Tuesday extended until January 15.

Afroze, a resident of Cheeta Camp in Trombay, was arrested on October 2 last year from Hotel Abbot in Navi Mumbai. He was handed over to the Mumbai police after the Navi Mumbai police found on him international debit cards, a global-roaming mobile phone and his passport bearing immigration seals of the U.S., the UK and Australia.

The Mumbai crime branch charged him under sections 121 (A) and 126 of the Indian Penal Code on December 3—the day Afroze allegedly confessed to being part of a suicide squad of pilots that was to crash a plane into the British House of Commons on September 11.

On Tuesday, Afroze was produced before additional chief metropolitan magistrate V.P. Taware at the Esplanade court amidst heavy security. The prosecution's remand application was granted in five minutes. This time, too, Afroze did not engage a lawyer to defend himself. Public prosecutor Prema Ranade pleaded before the court

that the police required time to visit foreign countries to verify Afroze's claims. The Mumbai police now wants to visit the U.S., the UK and Australia where Afroze received pilot's training in 1997.

The police have already verified from the Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, Pune, that Afroze had not passed his HSC examinations from the Somaiya College. He had submitted a forged HSC certificate to aviation schools abroad in order to secure admission.

The police also want to interrogate Afroze's London-based maternal uncle, Mubarak

Mussalman, who had allegedly 'wire-transferred' a huge amount of money to Afroze's ANZ bank account while he was training at a flying school at Moorabbin airport, Melbourne.

The police claim Afroze had also told them about a possible attack on Parliament much before it happened on December 13. The Mumbai police had alerted the Delhi police and central agencies about this.

Although his elder brother, Mohammed Farooq (35)—a customs clearing agent who, Afroze allegedly says, financed his world tours and pilot training—has also been booked as a co-accused under

the same charges, he has not been arrested so far. Surprisingly, the police have not moved the court to either press for a non-bailable arrest warrant against him or declare him an absconder. Crime branch officials are believed to be on his trail.

Prior to that, on December 14, Afroze's father, Abdul Razzak, had moved the court, alleging that his son had been tortured in police custody and that even in jail he was not being allowed any visitors. Mr Razzak even said that his son required psychiatric treatment for he seemed to have lost his mental balance. However, Afroze himself categorically denied these charges and insisted

On December 10, Afroze was making a confession.

Pak. arrests a step forward: Jaswant

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By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, DEC. 31. After days of rising tensions with Pakistan, India today extended a guarded-welcome to the reported arrest of the chiefs of the two organisations suspected to have masterminded the December 13 attack on the Parliament House. The head of the parent body of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, Hafeez Mohammad Saeed, was reportedly arrested this morning. The Jaish-e-Mohammad chief, Maulana Masood Azhar, along with 50 of his supporters, has been remanded for 90 days.

"If this information is confirmed then it is a right step in the right direction," the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, said striking a conciliatory note after a meeting of the Cabinet Committee of Security (CCS) this morning. These arrests by Pakistan have been apparently made in response to mounting U.S. pressure on it to curb terrorists and in the wake of the sizeable Indian

troop build-up along the border.

India, however, made it categorical that these steps taken by Pakistan today were not enough. "We hope that such actions against terrorists targeting India, including Jammu and Kashmir, would be pursued vigorously until cross-border terrorism in our country is completely eliminated," Mr. Singh said.

Elaborating on Mr. Singh's comments, the spokesperson of the External Affairs Ministry, Ms. Nirupama Rao, said this evening that India wanted to see "the beginning of a new approach" by Pakistan.

With Pakistan showing an inclination to crack down on India-centric terrorist groups, New Delhi this afternoon handed over a list of 20 wanted "criminals and terrorists", now residing in Pakistan. The list was handed over to the Pakistan Deputy High Commissioner, Mr. Jalil Abbas Jilani, by the Joint Secretary on the Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan desk in the External Affairs Ministry, Mr.

Arun Singh. Government sources said India might hand over more such lists to Pakistan in the future.

Out of the 20 names, Pakistan was already acquainted with the names of 14, during the Agra summit. Six more names, mainly of Kashmiri terrorists, have now been added. This includes the Jaish chief, Maulana Masood Azhar, who has been implicated for his role in the October 1 attack on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly and the December 13 attack.

The list mainly includes key individuals accused in the Mumbai blasts and the five who hijacked the Indian Airlines plane in December 1999. The prime accused in the Mumbai blasts are Dawood Ibrahim, Anees Ibrahim, Chotta Shakeel, Abu Salem and Tiger Memon. India had shared the information with the United States, the sources added.

While the handing over of the list is an important step, sources here emphasised that India's concerns went far beyond the arrest and repatriation of these individuals. India's prime objective was to see the permanent eradication of cross-border terrorism from Pakistani soil.

Not surprisingly, India, from now on, would look for "serious and sustained action" that would signify Pakistan's intention to end cross-border terrorism. India would gauge Pakistan's intent not by its public pronouncements alone. Instead, it would draw its conclusions by continuously and independently monitoring the evolving Pakistani disposition towards cross-border terrorism.

India's approach to the resumption of a dialogue with Pakistan remained linked to meaningful action on the ground against terrorism by Pakistan. Mr. Jaswant Singh may meet his Pakistani counterpart, Mr. Abdul Sattar, in Kathmandu. However, detailed discussions on substantive issues during such a meeting are unlikely. The spokesperson reiterated that India had opened its airspace to facilitate the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf's transit to Kathmandu for the SAARC summit following Pakistan's request. "But it was now up to Pakistan choose this or any other option."

Pak. to examine list: Page 11

A positive signal: Islamabad

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 31. Islamabad today welcomed reports from New Delhi of a possible meeting between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries in Kathmandu on the sidelines of the coming SAARC summit. The indication came from the Foreign Office spokesman, Mr. Aziz Ahmed Khan, at a news briefing here. Mr. Khan said Pakistan would welcome a de-escalation of tension on the LoC and the border with India through diplomatic means. "Our stated position is that we are ready for dialogue anytime, anywhere and at any level. The ball is in India's court. We believe all differences could be sorted out through dialogue and negotiations."

Mr. Khan was responding to reports from New Delhi that the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, had hinted at a possible meeting with the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar. The spokesman was asked to comment on the report that Mr. Singh had not ruled out a meeting with his Pakistani counterpart on the sidelines of the SAARC summit.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, visited the Command Operation Centre of the Air Force and reviewed the preparations. Pakistan's Air Chief, Air Marshal Mushaf Ali Mir, briefed him on the strategy and deployment. Reports said the PAF had moved its air formation to the Indian border.

Addressing senior commanders and staff officers, Gen. Musharraf said that "Pakistan is a responsible and peace-loving nation, but let there be no illusion that in case of any aggression committed against Pakistan we will retaliate with complete national will and resolve."

He told the PAF commanders that "in all great battles the numerically inferior forces have overcome their adversaries with better standard of training and resolve. I have no doubt that with the present state of operational readiness, faith and conviction Pakistan Air Force will be able to reply any challenge in benefiting manner."

'Tough measures if diplomacy fails'

SOMEWHERE IN THE WESTERN SECTOR, DEC. 31. The Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, has warned Pakistan that India will take decisions which will be "very demanding" if its efforts to make Islamabad accede to Indian demands regarding terrorism failed.

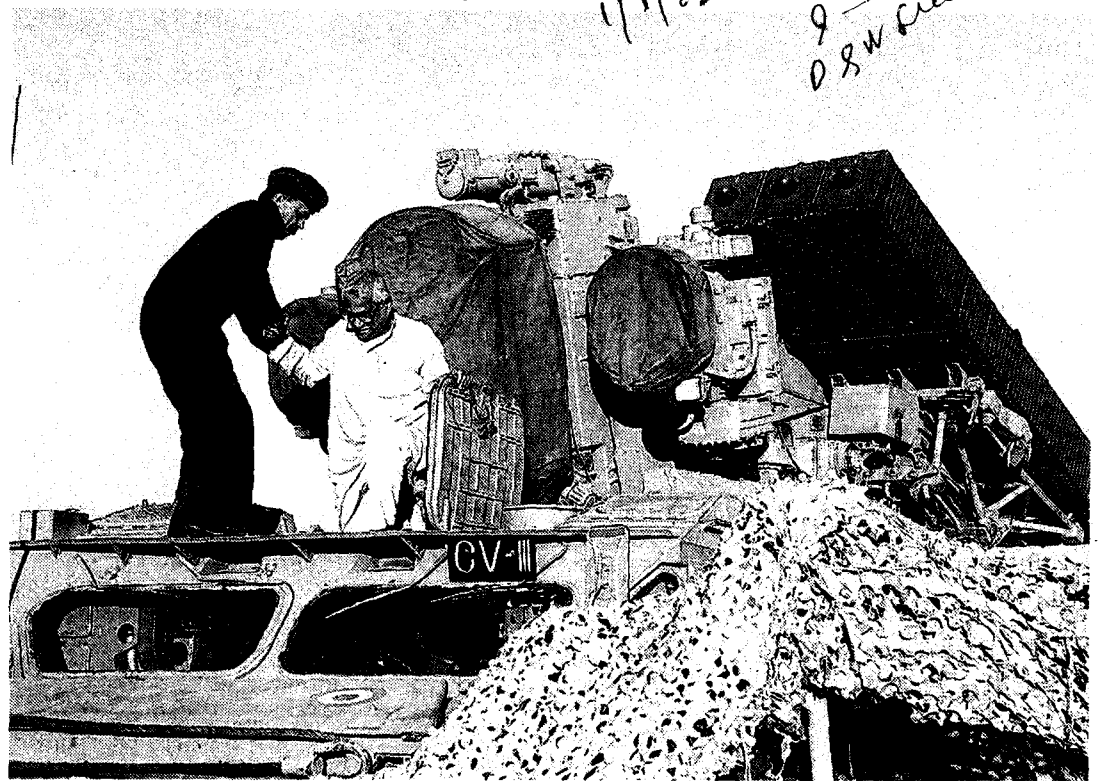
"So far we have concentrated on the diplomatic offensive and this will continue till one concludes that an end of the road in terms of diplomacy is reached," he said, addressing troops of the Army and Air Force at forward locations in this sector.

Diplomatic efforts were "perhaps likely" to bring results "but in an unlikely event of this not happening, then one will have to take decisions and these decisions will be very demanding."

He said "we want Pakistan and other countries to understand that we want our expectations from Islamabad on the issue of terrorism met through diplomatic efforts". Stressing that Pakistan still did not appear to be honest in its actions against terrorists, he said it "should understand and accept how big a sin it has committed".

"We don't want any such situation where there could be a lot of loss in this region," he said, adding that Pakistan has thrust proxy-war on India over the last decade and the world should see and make Islamabad desist from it.

Mr. Fernandes took a broadside at the U.S., saying its objective in



An airman helping the Defence Minister, Mr. George Fernandes, climb a launch vehicle for missiles at an undisclosed location near the Pakistan border in the western sector in Rajasthan on Sunday. — AFP

the war against terrorism was limited to catching or killing Osama bin Laden and had done nothing "more than rhetoric" in "making Pakistan understand" the gravity of the situation.

Lauding the G-8 statement asking Pakistan to meet the demands of India, he said it indicates "we are on the right track". The Eu-

ropean Union, the U.S. and the U.K. also have told Pakistan to act against terrorists.

"There is considerable pressure on Pakistan by the world powers and it indicates that some of our efforts are making its impact. But to what extent it goes, is still not known," he said, adding "hope-

fully, something worthwhile will come out of it". Alleging that the U.S. had not done much to make Pakistan act against the terrorist groups operating in Kashmir, he said the U.S. reaction to the attack on the Parliament House was "confined to rhetoric which has still not translated into any decisive conclusion". — PTI

11/1 2002
HD-11

President re-promulgates POTO

HD-11

By J. Venkatesan

NEW DELHI, DEC. 31. The President last night promulgated the Prevention of Terrorism (second) Ordinance (POTO) as the Bill to replace the earlier ordinance issued on October 24 could not be introduced during the winter session of Parliament as the Government faced stiff resistance from the Opposition.

According to the Government, the terrorist attack on Parliament on December 13 has further strengthened the resolve to carry the fight against terrorism to its logical conclusion.

While 23 outfits were declared terrorist organisations under the October 24 ordinance, two more organisations have been named terrorist outfits under the new ordinance.

The POTO Bill, 2001 was discussed in various fora including the Chief Ministers' Conference on Internal Security held on November 17; the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Home Affairs which met on No-

vember 23 and 26 and the all-party meeting called by the Prime Minister.

A number of views were expressed during these meetings and the Government, after considering them, has incorporated the following modifications in the new ordinance, but by and large the same provisions incorporated in the earlier ordinance have been retained.

In the revised ordinance, the controversial Sec. 3(8) which makes provision for punishment of a person who is in possession of information which he knows or believes to be of material assistance in preventing the commission of terrorist act and fails to disclose that information to police, has been deleted, following apprehensions voiced by the media that the provision was likely to be misused against journalists.

Clause 7 has been modified to delete reference to special courts, thus doing away with concurrent jurisdiction of the Designated Authority and the special courts and

to provide for an appeal against the order made by the Designated Authority to the special court.

Clause 8 has been modified to vest the power of forfeiture of the proceeds of terrorism in a special court instead of the Designated Authority; 'property' defined under clause 2(1)(d) shall now include 'Bank Accounts'.

The new ordinance which will be in force for three years (as against five years in the earlier ordinance) also provides for laying of an annual interception report by the Central Government before each House of Parliament.

A transitional provision has been made to enable the sessions court to try the offences punishable under the ordinance till special courts are constituted.

Passport ordinance re-issued

The President has also re-issued the ordinance to amend the Passport Act providing for impounding of passports or travel documents of anti-national elements or militants at the point of

embarkation or immigration for four weeks with powers to extend the time limit.

The earlier ordinance issued on October 23 could not be enacted into a law in the winter session of Parliament which necessitated re-promulgation of the same.

Under the new ordinance, the person whose passport has been impounded will be given an opportunity of being heard within eight weeks and thereafter the Centre can modify or revoke the order. The various powers granted to the State Governments by the earlier ordinance have been withdrawn as it was felt that they could be misused.

Roorkee University ordinance re-issued

The President issued another ordinance, the Institutes of Technology (Amendment) Second Ordinance, making Roorkee University the seventh IIT in the country as the earlier ordinance issued on October 23 could not be enacted into a law in the winter session.

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